THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

BY H. WESLEY DENNIS AND G. H. DIX

LONDON DIOCESAN SUNDAY SCHOOL MANUALS

FOR SCHOLARS OF 13

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THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

London Diocesan Sunday School Manuals

Issued under the authority of THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON

Editor: REV. S. KIRSHBAUM, B.D.

HON. SECRETARY, BISHOP OF LONDON'S SUNDAY SCHOOL COUNCIL

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A COURSE OF LESSONS ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, ILLUSTRATED FROM THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES

BY THE

REV. CANON H. WESLEY DENNIS, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, BATTERSEA
AND HON. CANON OF SOUTHWARK

AND THE

REV. G. H. DIX, M.A.

ASSISTANT CURATE OF WIMBLEDON; ASSISTANT DIOCESAN INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, SOUTHWARK; AND LECTURER AT ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, BATTERSEA

[For Scholars of 13 and over]

WITH MAP

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COMMENDATORY NOTE

By the Bishop of London

I wish heartily God-speed to these little Manuals which are issued under the direction of my Sunday School Council. We have splendid material to use in the devotion and self-sacrifice of thousands of Sunday School teachers, and my great desire is to forge that material into a more effective instrument for moulding the lives and characters of the children committed to their care.

It is in the hope that this series of Manuals will be of great help to the teachers in preparing their lessons for the children that we now send them forth.

A. F. LONDON.

Fulham Palace, S.W.,
September 1912.

PREFACE

The series of lessons has been compiled in accordance with the Syllabus of Graded Lessons for Sunday Schools drawn up by the Director of Sunday Schools in the Diocese of London. They attempt to meet the desire of the Bishop of London's Sunday School Council for a series of Manuals compiled to help teachers to give definite Church teaching and enable them to present it in an interesting and effective manner to their scholars.

The authors are alone responsible for this Manual, and the Bishop of London's Sunday School Council has no responsibility for any views that may be presented in this work.

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MAP

THE PAULINE WORLD, A.D. 44–60 . . . *At end of Book*
Based on the map in "St. Paul the Traveller," by Sir W. Ramsey (Hodder & Stoughton).

INTRODUCTION

Our purpose in these lessons is to teach clearly and consecutively the story of the Acts, and to show that we have in this history the beginnings of the Church.

The form of the lessons follows the scheme prescribed for this series of manuals, and we wish therefore to offer only this brief explanation, that by the statement of an Aim at the head of every lesson we subscribe our belief to the conviction that every teacher should have before him something definite which he means to teach, and that many a lesson fails because it is aimless. The Aim defines the central idea of the lesson. The Preparation or Introductory work will vary according to the class and their circumstances and knowledge. It must touch their circle of interests: it is therefore the teacher's necessary business to find out what these are and to utilise them. Presentation—the putting forward of the new matter—should as far as possible be made a process of discovery: this does not mean wrapping facts in mystery or beating about the bush, but work involving the thought and effort of the scholars. Encourage the class to look for themselves and to tell you what they think and see. The teacher's questions should be to help them to help themselves. And by Application we do not intend to suggest that the teacher should always aim at pointing a moral in so many words. It means, as Aim does, that every lesson should be an arrow shot at a mark, not shot into the air, but the application may be implicit or explicit, direct or indirect. Avoid preaching. The application will often come out best in the Expression Work.

As regards *Methods*, when we say in our notes "Read," we hope that teachers will vary this exercise as much as possible. Sometimes the teacher will read a passage of difficulty or special solemnity, sometimes individual members of the class may read aloud or the whole class silently, but we warn teachers emphatically against simultaneous reading aloud or reading round the class verse by verse. Teach incidents through documents, not verses. Suggest complete pictures.

Illustrations.—The teacher should have large clear maps for use

before the class, and a blackboard for writing up the lesson-outline; failing this, prepare on cartridge paper a summary of the main heads of the lesson, clearly written with brush or parcel-post pen. This summary can be unrolled step by step. The title and heads of the lessons are arranged to help in this. The class should be given or encouraged to make their own outline maps and fill them in regularly as the work proceeds.

Expression Work should form a regular part of the course of instruction, and must be adapted to the powers and opportunities of the class. It should be used not only to test work done but to foster interest in the work to come, to secure the co-operation of the class, and to help to form a habit of Bible reading and study.

The *Teacher's own study* must be systematic if he would keep his work fresh and deserve success.

We suggest that of diverse views on debatable points the teacher should take that which approves itself to his own careful reading and judgment.

Finally, we urge that the *Lesson-notes* are meant to be suggestive and helpful only, both in matter and method: the teacher should not use them as a handbook in class: a successful lesson must be the teacher's own, and be made his own by thought and prayer for the class whose hearts and minds he is striving to make ready for the Lord.

We crave indulgence for the use of telegraphic language in the notes, necessitated by the exigencies of space.

H. WESLEY DENNIS.
G. H. DIX.

Recommended:—(For Teacher) Large map of St. Paul's Journeys and Roman Empire, mounted on roller (S.P.C.K.), 5*s*. (For Class) Outline maps of same (Johnston), 1*d*. Series 4 of National Society's Illustrations for Teacher, 3*d*. (For Teachers' Reference Library), Rackham's *Acts* (Methuen), Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller* (Hodder & Stoughton), Dummelow's *Bible Commentary* (Macmillan), Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* (Longmans). *N.B.*—Except theory of "Galatia."

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Lesson I. THE WRITER AND HIS BOOK

Aim. *To show that the author was S. Luke, and to teach his purpose in writing.*

PREPARATION

Picture man with writing materials. What may he write about? Class suggests letter to friend, story, science, &c. Suppose class living soon after our Lord's Ascension, and writing. What would book be about? Life of Christ, story of Apostles, Christians and their doings, &c. A wonderful time—world to be won for Christ by few people—a time of heroes. What interesting stories they could tell! We are going to speak of a man who learnt some of their stories, took part in others, and wrote history of these first Christians. Class asked to suggest titles for book. Where shall we find it? Ought to be very interesting—a book of adventures for Christ.

PRESENTATION

I. What titles given to first four New Testament books? Why? What will they speak of? Want the sequel to this, continuation in new way. Read Acts i. 1. What does writer say of earlier book? Find the man's name to whom it is addressed (Theophilus). Class turns to beginning of each Gospel; finds S. Luke's. Then who wrote Acts?

II. Earlier book ought to speak of writer. Read silently S. Luke i. 1–4. What does he say of himself? Teacher points out: (1) he is an accurate historian; (2) because he has "traced the course of all things from the first" (R.V.); (3) but that others (eyewitnesses) told him the things he wrote of our Lord. Picture this careful writer, learning all he could of Christ and Apostles, finishing first book, sitting down to begin second. Note (Acts i. 1), the first tells of "all that Jesus *began* both to do and teach" until Ascension. What will second tell? What He *continued* to do and teach after that by sending the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles.

III. Gospel finished, writer begins Acts. Whose Acts? (Title.) Who were they? How many now? Name some. These are the heroes of the story—chiefly S. Peter and S. John of the Twelve—S. Paul the last Apostle. Not *all* their acts, only those important for their work. What work? To continue Jesus' doing and teaching. Why did they work? To spread Church. What do we mean by

Church ? The company of believers in Jesus as the Christ, baptized into the Threefold Name, and taught to keep Christ's commands (*cf.* S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

IV. In what city did the Church begin ? (4). The city of Christ's shame becomes the city of His glory (S. Luke xxiv. 49). Acts tells of beginning of Church—adventure, battle, failures and success. Speak of God's Providence in raising a writer so careful as S. Luke to record these things, and then go on to the character of the man—young when Christ ascended, Greek doctor (Gentile, Col. iv. 14), beloved, interested in his profession (Acts iii. 2, 7 note medical details), healer of souls (Philemon 24), faithful friend and devoted companion of S. Paul in mission to Gentile world, witness of his work, with him till death, proud to record the great story (2 Tim. iv. 11). If time, see where he joined S. Paul (Lesson XXIX). Tradition makes him painter of Christ's portrait—great artist in *words* (portrait in Gospel). Some have thought him one of the Seventy (Luke x. 1), and also one of the two going to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13); neither probable (Luke i. 1, 2). Heard much from S. Paul, something from Philip the Deacon (*cf.* chap. viii.). Perhaps wrote Acts A.D. 63–64. No account of S. Paul's trial by Nero at Rome, his release, further travels, last imprisonment, martyrdom (A.D. 64–67).

APPLICATION

Work of these early Christians has lasted till now and will last through eternity. We must continue their work. Where shall we obtain strength for that ? S. Luke careful to learn all he could of it. We must be equally so; know why we belong to Church; do all we can to spread her message of the Risen Ascended Christ. Read slowly Collect for S. Luke's Day.

Summary for Blackboard :

1. Acts of chief Apostles in spreading the Church.
2. S. Luke the writer.
3. Acts continues the Risen Christ's doing and teaching.
4. The Risen Christ worked in and through His Church.
5. He is still with His Church continuing His work.

Expression Work : 1. Find out all you can about S. Luke, collect references, write texts. 2. Show from Gospels, by prominence of S. Peter, and friendship of S. John with our Lord, that they were fitted to be leaders.

Hymn 425, A. and M., "What thanks and praise to Thee we owe."

Lesson II. THE GOSPEL OF THE HOLY GHOST

Aim. *To teach that the Church was planned to carry out our Lord's teaching by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson, summary. Church against world, gigantic battle needing Divine power to win. Our Lord foresaw it, gave promise of help. What? (S. John xvi. 13, 14). S. Luke tells us how He fulfilled promise in Acts (ii. 1–4). What did we call S. Luke's first book? (Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to S. Luke.) What might Acts be called? (Gospel of the Comforter according to S. Luke.) Teacher explains this title=Strengthener, *cf.* fort, fortress. Who is He? Third *Person* of Holy Trinity. Now see how Church was prepared for His coming.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Great Forty Days.*—Let class tell of any events following the Resurrection, *e.g.* the Appearances of the Risen Christ, still on earth. How long did He remain? Acts i. 2–5: read silently. What was He doing? Teacher will point out: (1) Commandment to Apostles; (2) Teaching about things concerning Kingdom; (3) Order to remain at Jerusalem. Why did our Lord remain forty days?

II. *Our Lord gave Commandments.*—Class may suggest what this might be, *e.g.* Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion, Holy Orders. Apostles had a great task to perform; necessary to receive instructions. We have these things in the Church to-day; can trace them back to Apostles in Acts. Refer to ii. 46, xx. 11, viii. 17.

III. *He spoke of Things concerning the Kingdom.*—Whose Kingdom? What is this Kingdom? Where God reigns—the Church (*cf.* Lesson I). King gives laws for it. (*Cf.* English history: Alfred's laws.) Apostles must extend Kingdom. How? (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). What is means of entrance to Kingdom? Let class tell Parable of Mustard Seed, and of Great Supper. Apostles must learn to face difficulties (by Prayer, Communion), how to organise Church (ii. 42), how to Confirm, celebrate Holy Communion, &c. They soon did these things (see ii. 46, xx. 11, viii. 17). Teacher will show strongly and clearly that what the Apostles did so uniformly must have come

from direct commands of Christ Himself—all did same things in same way. Read i. 6–8.

IV. *Wait at Jerusalem.*—Why? What would Holy Spirit give? Power from on high; needed this to fight the world. Class reads silently Luke xxiv. 50–53. Note how writer picks up thread of Gospel story to begin Acts—his skill. Then picture walk to Olivet, talk of kingdom, the Apostles' mistaken question, and Christ's answer of a world-wide Kingdom extending from Jerusalem. Learn verse 8, and note order—Jerusalem, Judæa, Samaria, the World. Acts tells us of this extension. Then Jesus ascends. What is His work now? (Hymn 315, "His Manhood pleads," &c.) *Cf.* John xiv. 2. One day He will return (i. 11). But meantime Apostles must "Watch and Pray" for Holy Spirit. Where? (Upper Room.) Why there?

V. *The waiting Church.*—Not idle, but waiting for fulfilment of our Lord's promise. What? How did Church prepare? (i. 14). Notice Acts opens with prayerful watching—lesson for Church always. *Cf.* child looking for Confirmation—same Gift, prayerfulness, watchfulness necessary. One "Act" of whole Church. Think of Judas; see i. 18, 19. What will others do? Read i. 21–26. What will S. Matthias' work be? (Witness of Christ's Resurrection.) Why should he be chosen now? (To receive power.) Class will read Collect for S. Matthias; point out meaning for us. Describe present method of appointing Bishops; nominated by King, approved by chief clergy of diocese. "Lots" not used after coming of Holy Spirit into Church. Used for that time only, to show faith in living Christ still guiding Church, though Ascended.

APPLICATION

"*Watch and Pray*" *always.*—Learn home prayers, home duties well, and teach them to younger brothers and sisters. For children preparing for Confirmation—compare with Apostles waiting for gift of Holy Spirit. "Tarry in Jerusalem"—a city of prayer. Pray daily like Apostles. Watch for gift, think of it, get ready for it. Pray for whole Church. Say together Collect for sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Expression Work: 1. Read the three accounts of the Ascension given in New Testament. 2. Find in Gospels words of our Lord promising the Comforter.

Hymn 207, A. and M., "Our blest Redeemer ere He breathed."

Lesson III. THE SPIRIT OF POWER

Aim. *To teach the work of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.*

PREPARATION

When a gift is given (bicycle, bat, workbox, &c.) how glad we are. Ask ourselves what we shall do with it, what difference it will make to us. Will always think too of the giver, and remember the day (Christmas, birthday) for years to come, whenever we use the gift. Now think of gift Christ promised—a heavenly, powerful gift. What? (Acts i. 8). What should be His work? Remember what Church was doing before He came? (Lesson II). Read silently ii. 1–4.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Morning.*—Nine days gone since Ascension, forty-nine since Passover. Disciples like watchmen in old city, looking for dawn, straining their eyes for first rays. Church like a splendid engine, all parts ready, every wheel in place, one thing lacking—power to drive it forward. Where was the engine? (Upper room.) Teacher tells graphically of early assembly on Day of Pentecost. What are disciples doing? (Watching, praying—motto since Gethsemane.) Now all ready (verse 15), then sudden sound, startling, mysterious, thrilling. Then sudden sight—like what? The Power had come, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Morning brings power, strength, joy. Remember first morning in Genesis? God's voice, then light for creation. Pentecost the "new creation"—sound (God's voice), light again. What is this new creation? (The Church of Christ.) Teacher will enforce that Church is child of morning (*cf.* Resurrection early on Easter Day, Luke xxiv. 1, John xx. 1). Practical lesson—rise early to worship. Church is Holy Ghost's New Creation, born to win the world for Christ, an eternal work.

II. *The Morning's Work.*—Picture strong healthy boy or girl, just got up, prayers said, going out to face the world in freshness of strength. Church like that—young, strong, anxious to work, ready to do anything for King. What will be first work? Tell Jerusalem. Why? (i. 8). Apostles go into street, probably towards Temple. Why? Whom will they find there? Jews from all parts of world. Why are

they there? Teacher will briefly describe Pentecost as Jewish harvest festival=Christian Whitsuntide. *Cf.* modern harvest festival, people flocking to Church to thank God for blessings. Picture this crowd in Temple. How wonderful is God's Providence—finds right moment for Church to begin work of reaping harvest of souls for Christ. Not easy, some hindrances. What? Mockery (13). Others anxious to learn. What did they say? (11). So harvest work begins. S. Peter puts in the sickle.

III. *S. Peter's Sermon.*—Who is leader? Let class suggest what he will be likely to speak of. What would class have said had they been in S. Peter's place? Apostles not drunken (defence); meaning of gift of tongues; Holy Spirit's coming a witness to Living Christ. What does a preacher do now first? Text. So then; read 17–21; explains Pentecost. From Whom did S. Peter learn method of preaching? Our Lord. Remember any sermon of His? (Luke iv. 16–22). So Church follows His example down to to-day. Who has guided Church in this? Holy Spirit. So the sickle here is the Word of God. Holy Ghost, "Who spake by the prophets," gave it to S. Peter and to clergy of to-day, so that they might reap harvest for Christ.

APPLICATION

Whitsunday the day of "new creation," birthday of Church. She is the child of the morning, ever fresh, vigorous, with life of Holy Spirit. When was our own "new creation"? Baptism, as little children. Holy Ghost gives special gifts in Confirmation. We must make this a Pentecost. Holy Spirit comes to help us to reap harvest of goodness for Christ in our own lives. Must ask Him daily to help; pray for "the fellowship of the Holy Ghost," Companionship of Spirit of Power. Thus we can make every day a Pentecost for ourselves by prayer. See Hymn 157. Say it to-night on knees, and use Confirmation Blessing as a prayer.

Expression Work: 1. Find from Gospels and Epistles all names given to Holy Spirit.

2. Write out our Lord's promises of Comforter.

3. Find all meanings for word Whitsunday.

Hymn 157, A. and M., "Come, Holy Ghost," or 211, "O Holy Ghost, Thy people bless."

Lesson IV. THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTION

Aim. *To show that Faith in the Risen Christ was the centre of the Apostles' teaching.*

PREPARATION

Teacher will speak of last lesson, its subject, leading to—How did Holy Spirit show His fellowship with Apostles? What did they do? Who was leader? Now contrast S. Peter and Apostles on Maundy Thursday (cowards) with same men on Whitsunday. S. Peter denied Christ to a girl; now faces a multitude. Who made this difference in him? Teacher will contrast as vividly as possible—failures made successes, cowards into heroes, runaways into knights. *Cf.* King Arthur and his knights united to do good. Read ii. 22–36.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Peter's Sermon.*—Picture scene in Temple—crowds, Apostles, S. Peter standing up. Recall text—last lesson. If forgotten, read it again, and ask for explanation. Now sermon. Let class give substance of it first. Then teacher will analyse as follows:—

1. Jesus slain by sinful Jews (22, 23).
2. Jesus raised and glorified by God (24).
3. Resurrection foretold by David, Ps. xvi. (25–31).
4. Apostles witnesses of Resurrection (32).
5. Holy Ghost given by glorified Jesus (33).
6. Jesus is Lord and Christ for ever (34–36).

What is the central point? Jesus risen, glorified, with God the Father, sends forth promised Holy Spirit. Why has He sent Holy Spirit? To make witnesses to risen Jesus as Lord (Jehovah) and Christ (Messiah). Class reads silently to verse 41.

II. *Hearts Stirred.*—S. Peter no coward now: his words go home! What do hearers say? (37). What is his answer? Ask class to point out the parts—repentance, faith, baptism, forgiveness, gift of Holy Ghost. *Cf.* with last part of Catechism, What is required of persons to be baptized? Repentance, Faith. What is the inward and spiritual grace? Forgiveness, New life. Show that we believe to-day what S. Peter taught. Church is Apostolic; Baptism its door of entrance. Note place of font by door. One means of entry

into Church. The Unseen Person at Holy Baptism is Holy Ghost. Comes to abide in our hearts, to make us holy with Christ's holiness (*cf.* Member of Christ). Then note verse 39, Jews first, Gentiles, all the world, next—prophecy of call of Gentiles. We shall see later how fulfilled. *Cf.* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

III. *Result.*—Those who received his word were baptized, three thousand—a splendid harvest of work for one day. Refer to Mustard Seed (Matt. xiii. 31). So far the seed hidden, now well above ground as a stem, strong and healthy. Note also our Lord's command (i. 8). Why had the Holy Spirit come? (To make them Christ's witnesses "in Jerusalem.") The Apostles were faithful to Him; the Spirit made them witnesses to Him as the Risen Christ. They preached "the Gospel of the Resurrection" in the power of the Spirit. The city of the Cross had become the city of the Risen King. His Resurrection shows His power in making men rise from sin. Read Collect for Easter Eve. By baptism we die to sin with Him and rise to holiness in the power of His endless life (Heb. vii. 16). That is the central message of the Church from Pentecost until the Last Day—new life, sent by the Risen Christ through the Holy Spirit.

APPLICATION

What is central point of S. Peter's sermon? (See above—Christ lives—the Living Christ the foundation of the Christian Creed, the central point of the faith of the Church.) It must be the chief article of our personal faith. Never lose that certain truth. Our baptism stands for this, our Confirmation, Holy Communion, our prayers in His Name. We believe that He still gives us His Spirit to work in us and make us holy. Our part is to live as witnesses to Him. He must ever be like our King. Follow His example; live His life.

> "Follow the Christ, the King,
> Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King—
> Else, wherefore born?"

Expression Work: 1. Gather from Epistle to Ephesians any texts showing that the Holy Spirit is doing Christ's work in the Church.

2. What is the importance of Holy Baptism in the Church of Christ? Find all references to it in Church Catechism.

Hymn 154, A. and M., "When God of old came down from heaven."

Lesson V. THE CHURCH OF THE RISEN CHRIST

Aim. *To teach the "marks" of the Early Church, and to show that the Church of to-day has them.*

PREPARATION

Refer to Parable of Mustard Seed—produces same kind of tree. Acorn always produces oak, never anything else. Use our Lord's teaching on Vine and Branches (S. John xv.), one life through all parts. What then should we expect of the Church to-day? It will be of same nature as Early Church, be known as "the Church" in same ways. Similarly of persons—they grow up, but preserve their names, their family connections, their parentage, &c., though they may go to other parts of the world. Let us see then what S. Luke says the Early Church was like. Read Acts ii. 43–47, noting especially verse 42 (R.V.); iv. 34.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Apostles' Teaching.*—Recall from Lessons II. and IV. how the Apostles all taught the same things. Class will suggest reasons for this, *e.g.* their constant companionship during the whole of our Lord's ministry; the Great Forty Days' Teaching, the Coming of the Holy Ghost to unite them. What was the central point of this teaching? (The Resurrection, Risen Christ.) Can you recall any other points? (Father's love in sending Jesus, His Death upon the Cross, Holy Spirit, Holy Baptism, &c.) Where do we to-day find all this? (Bible and Creeds.) Creeds are short Bibles. So Church to-day teaches same truth. About Whom? (Holy Trinity.) Teacher will show three sections of Apostles' Creed, call attention to its name. These truths sum up the main elements of "the Christian Faith." When did you promise to believe that? (Baptism.) Everybody baptized promised same thing. So whole Church follows "The Apostles' Teaching," hence rightly called Apostolic Church to-day.

II. *The Apostles' Fellowship.*—How many Churches are there? (One.) Who has made it one? (Holy Spirit.) Have just seen it was one in teaching, in faith; now further it was one in fellowship, in life—no divisions. Christians showed their unity of life. How? Class will suggest how this could have been done, *e.g.* worship, service to others. Teacher adds: (i) Rich help poor "as they had need"; (ii) common prayer, as to-day (what Prayer would be often used? Lord's Prayer. Why?); (iii) all attend the special Christian Service. (What? why? what name in Acts? "the Breaking of Bread"). Church to-day does all this, keeps in "the Apostles' Fellowship." Let class give details respecting each point as practised in the Church nowadays. Apostolic again!

III. *The Breaking of Bread.*—What service is this? Who gave it? When? What was His command? (Do this, &c.) When might He have taught how to celebrate Holy Communion? (Forty Days.) Let us find some references in Acts. Class will turn to ii. 46, xx. 7, 11, and 1 Cor. xi. 23–26. How important then this Service of Unity, Fellowship. Church still puts it as the most important of her services, and the greatest honour for her people to take part in it. Find it in Prayer Book. So to-day Church keeps this "mark." What does Catechism say of "the inward part"? (The Body and Blood, &c.) So by this service we are united in a special way to our Risen Lord, and to all others, living and departed, through Him. (See Prayer for Church Militant.) Thus the Church of to-day is united to the Church of the Apostles (Apostolic) in the Breaking of Bread.

IV. *The Prayers.*—See R.V.—not simply "prayers," but "the prayers," well known, a set form. When might it have been framed? What would be the central Prayer? Why? Would "the prayers" include anything else? (Confession, Thanks, Praise, Instruction.) *Cf.* with Exhortation, Matins or Evensong, and make class see these things mentioned as the parts of Worship. Show that Church keeps a set form for her public services. Discuss reasons why. (Prevents us from becoming selfish, enforces unity, unites us to past and future in our worship, everyone knows what comes next, ensures that we cover all parts of Worship, &c.) Church of to-day keeps this mark of Early Church (Apostolic). How?

Summary.—Ask class to give "four marks," and to show how Church still has them.

APPLICATION

We ought to be proud of Church of England which can go back in its history to our Lord and His Apostles. But useless to be proud of her unless we live her life, keep her teaching, cling to her and work for her, attend Holy Communion regularly, and take part in her common worship. Church-life is a practical thing which we must carry out faithfully. Remember Whose Church it is—the Risen Christ's, our King's. Obey Him loyally by doing what the Apostles did.

Expression Work: 1. Write out 1 Cor. xi. 23–26. What does this prove?

2. Find from S. John's Gospel, xvii., texts to show that our Lord prayed for the unity of His Church.

3. Show that the Church is Catholic (universal in time, place, teaching), One (Founder, Faith, purpose), Holy (Head, Holy Spirit, members).

Hymn 215, A. and M., "The Church's one foundation."

Lesson VI. THE HEALING OF THE BODY—THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST

Aim. *To show that the Church of Christ cares for bodies as well as souls, and to teach gratitude for our Lord's work of healing our bodies and souls.*

PREPARATION

Ask class to repeat first sentence of Nicene Creed to "invisible." Recall creation of Adam, two parts to his nature, visible body and invisible soul. Which was higher? Christ's aim was to save both. This also the aim of His Church. Often our Lord had to heal bodies in order to heal souls. What causes sickness of soul? (Sin.) Often also causes sickness of body, *e.g.* intemperance, greediness, neglect. Ever seen a hospital? Known anyone go there? Why? What does a Christian person do when very sick? (Ask for prayers of Church.) And when cured? (Return thanks there.) Does Church nowadays care for people's bodies? (*Cf.* Hospital Sunday Fund, Visitation of sick by clergy, &c.) Let us see how this began. Find Acts iii. 1–10, and read.

PRESENTATION

I. *An Act of SS. Peter and John.*—Two very important Apostles. Have heard much of former; can class tell anything of latter? They are together here. Had they been together before? (John xx. 2). Shall find them together again (Lessons VII and IX). Contrast the two men: Peter, impetuous, rash, brave as a lion; John quiet, calm, thoughtful. A splendid balance of gifts. Picture scene—hour of sacrifice, many people going to Temple, these two with them. Arrive at Gate Beautiful (made of bronze, with massive gold and silver plates upon it). Drawing of plan of Temple would assist teacher to describe this and following incidents. A sad sight there—a man paralysed from birth, a beggar, well known, carried there daily to beg. Picture of Eastern beggar, ragged, filthy, parading his misery. Peter and John pass in crowd. What does beggar do? *Cf.* doors of Continental cathedrals; many beggars there to get a living upon alms of worshippers. Perhaps something about this man rather different from the rest; not so noisy, really wretched at having to beg. But he asks an alms. S. Peter first looks at him earnestly. Why? (To judge his real character.) Then speaks, "Silver and gold," &c., then raises him "by the hand."

II. *The Miracle.*—Do you remember S. Luke's profession? How does he show it here? (All kinds of medical detail.) Note again S. Peter's words. What do they show about our Lord? (Alive.)

What happens to the man? See then how Jesus' work on earth is continued from heaven (Lesson I). Recall any miracle of healing from the Gospels like this. How did this man show his gratitude? (verse 8). *Cf.* General Thanksgiving, "particularly to those," &c.

III. *In Solomon's Porch.*—Recall how Jesus had walked there (John x. 23). Describe porch briefly—ran along east wall, faced entrance—only part left of Solomon's building—something like a cloister where people could walk and talk—hence the crowd discussing miracle. Read iii. 11–26. S. Peter joins the crowd, seizes opportunity, preaches. Chief thoughts:—

1. Why be astonished at miracle? We have not done it (12).
2. Jesus wrought it (13).
3. You slew Him, but God raised Him (14, 15).
4. He is alive, and strong to heal (16).
5. You sinned in killing Him; repent (17–19).
6. He will come again from Heaven, where now He reigns (20, 21).
7. Your prophets foretold Him (22–24).
8. You ought to be blessed by His forgiveness (25, 26).

[*Additional Explanation:*

15. Prince of Life = The first-fruits of the resurrection, He triumphed over death.

18. Suffer. Jews did not look for suffering Messiah.

19. Times of refreshing=Peace and blessedness.

21. Restitution of all things=Sin disturbed creation (Rom. viii. 22, 23) which must be restored.

22–26. Raise up=send in human form (Incarnate) to redeem world (not simply raise from death here).]

APPLICATION

Healing of body by living Christ a sign of His power to heal souls. (*Cf.* S. Luke v. 18–26.) Learn verse 16. Name of Jesus above every name (Phil. ii. 9–11)=God (I am), Saviour. Bodily sickness often sent to us that Jesus may be glorified (S. John ix. 2, 3). Use sickness as time of penitence, prayer; thought about our Lord. Recovery should be followed by praise and thanksgiving—thank God in church, "in the presence of all the people." Thank Him for His Son's redemption, for forgiveness of sins, for means of grace, and hope of glory (*cf.* General Thanksgiving).

Expression Work: 1. Draw a plan of Herod's Temple.

2. Find in the New Testament any other wonderful events that took place in the Temple.

Hymn 294, A. and M., "O praise our Great and Gracious Lord."

Lesson VII. IMPRISONMENT AND RELEASE

Aim. *To teach that Christian courage is given in answer to prayer.*

PREPARATION

Begin by speaking to the class about their daily prayers. The ordinary events of every day can be made subject of prayer. "O Lord, be with me in my work, in my play, amusements, friendships, difficulties," &c. Prayer for others quite as important —*unselfish* prayer. People in whom we are interested have need of help, the sick, the sad, mourners, tempted, those in danger, in poverty, &c. Recall Church's prayer for "All sorts and conditions of men." She has always prayed for others, and her prayers have been answered. We shall read to-day what prayer did in the Acts (iv. 1–31).

PRESENTATION

I. *The Apostles taught the People.*—Recall Lesson IV. Now another scene; household of High Priest (Sadducees) assembled. Why? Think of their talk before the trial. What would they say to each other? Why did they hate this teaching of the Apostles? But ordinary people liked it; notice growth in number of converts (verse 4). Remember it was chief priests who stirred up the people to put our Lord to death.

II. *S. Peter's Speech to the Council.*—Why is he bold? (Holy Ghost is with him.) Contrast him now with night of denial. What does he speak of? (1) The healed man; (2) the risen Christ. Council in a great difficulty—the man there, the miracle known. Yet want to stop Apostles. How? (verse 18). Again S. Peter's boldness (19, 20)—no momentary thing, but continuous—not simply rash, but courageous. True courage continues.

III. *S. Peter's return to the Church.*—Imagine what Church is thinking, saying, doing all this time—consternation at first, then prayer and increased faith, hope, trust in God. Perhaps while they are praying the two Apostles return. What will they have to say? What does Church do? Read slowly and impressively iv. 24–30, so that class may grasp the separate parts. Then question on meaning.

One prayer—for safety of Apostles—has been answered. This new prayer for increased strength and boldness to preach and heal in the name of Jesus will be answered too.

IV. *The Answer to Prayer.*—Teach carefully that all prayers are answered. Illustrate by referring to Elijah's prayer, "Let me die," a wrong prayer answered by "No." Class will tell how Elijah was saved for further work. Other prayers answered by "Not yet; ask again." *Cf.* Israel in slavery in Egypt, prayed a long time for freedom, granted at last. Others again answered by "Yes" at once. *Cf.* Daniel's prayer, the penitent thief's prayer, &c. Here the answer to the prayer of the Church is "Yes." Why? (1) A good prayer; (2) Apostles needed zeal and courage to face hostile rulers. Think if government forbade a man to preach temperance, or goodness, or any religious duty. How difficult for him! Often happened in English history, *e.g.* Marian persecutions, Laud, the Non-jurors, &c. Exactly same thing in our story. Under such circumstances men must pray often and earnestly. So Church prayed; answer given (verse 31)—boldness and power granted.

APPLICATION

Three things to concentrate attention upon: (1) Persecution; (2) Release; (3) Increased Courage. All must expect the first if they are true disciples. It seems hard to endure; it requires a strong courage to go through manfully; but it makes us like Christ, and gives us real freedom, not slavery to evil. Our Lord never leaves us to suffer alone; He helps us and gives consolation. Joy comes after persecution endured manfully. Mockery is hard to bear; but the gladness of a good conscience is worth all the pain. Be firm! Then each attack well resisted and bravely endured makes us stronger and bolder for the next. Go "from strength to strength" like Apostles. The Name of Jesus is not something to be ashamed of, but to glory in, the greatest Name in the world. Remember baptismal promises! Recall cross on forehead, and its meaning—"Christ's faithful soldier"—a fighter, bold, strong, helped by Holy Spirit.

Expression Work: 1. Find any instances of prayer in the Old Testament, and show how God answered them?

2. Read S. John xvii., and find any parts of this prayer which God answered in Acts so far.

Hymn 290, A. and M., "Through all the changing scenes of life."

Lesson VIII. THE GREAT FAILURES

Aim. *To teach that sin makes us unable to do God's work.*

PREPARATION

Picture great battle—two armies fighting—say Waterloo. If one could see battle as Wellington saw it he would notice one *side* (English) gain, and other (French) lose. If we had been in ranks we should have seen some falling, others still fighting, but should not have known the whole story. So in battle with sin. Some fall, others press on, but our Commander sees the victory being won. What do we call those who continue the fight to the last? Brave soldiers, heroes, saints. Any in "Acts" so far? Now we must think of some failures. How fair "Acts" is—tells failures as well as successes. Name any failure so far? (Judas.)

PRESENTATION

I. *Judas Iscariot.*—Class will tell his story so far—Apostle, treasurer of band, love of money, covetous, thief, leading up to plot, betrayal, remorse, death. Let us think of his sin—not all at once; killed his conscience by degrees. Warn class of result of habitual sins. Lesson: check sin at beginning. Awful sentence about him, "Satan entered into the heart of Judas." Removed himself from God—spirit of evil in possession. Whose Spirit should have been there? What shut Him out? (Sin.) So with ourselves. Why then did Judas fail? Shut out Holy Spirit—no "power" to succeed, vanquished in fight. Yet almost a penitent—shame, sorrow, satisfaction for wrong done as far as possible, but no hope for future, no prayer for forgiveness. Question class to obtain this. S. Luke, careful historian, tells whole truth, gives warning to us. Any other failures you know of?

II. *Ananias and Sapphira.*—A new story, but same failure and same cause of it. Why did Judas fail? His sin separated him from God, and shut out Holy Spirit. *Cf.* Rev. iii. 20, and Hymn 207. Now this man and wife. Picture early life—Jews, converted, perhaps on Whitsunday. What next? Baptized, confirmed, communicants. Yet failures—stupid failures! Read story (Acts v. 1–11).

III. *True Charity.*—Picture of Early Church—few rich, many poor, none in want—recall "the Apostles' fellowship" (Lesson V). One

story told to show meaning of true charity—S. Barnabas. Tell story (iv. 34–37). Why did he do it? (Christ's command, Matt. vi. 19–21, also see John xv. 13.) Shows meaning of laying down life for friends in simple way. Teaches us self-sacrifice.

IV. *False Charity.*—Now contrast. Husband and wife wanted praise of men. Picture course of sin—thought, word, deed. Put away sinful thoughts at once. No real love, no spirit of sacrifice in these two. Our gifts not worthy unless they are sacrifices. *Cf.* our Lord's sacrifice; love prompted it; contrast Matt. vi. 1–4.

V. *Rebuke for Sin.*—Learn S. Peter's words. Satan "the father of lies"—these doing Satan's work. Why? Sin had shut out Spirit of Truth. *Cf.* Judas. No longer "power" to do good. Souls already dead. Recall Saul, first King of Israel, lost kingdom—"the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul." Same here and with Judas.

VI. *Result.*—No life without God—hearts dead—bodies die too. Notice "great fear." *Cf.* with lesson taught to Israel by Achan's death (Josh. vii. 25, 26). Same here; Church young, needs striking warning against sin. But sin always worse than punishment—spiritual death worse than bodily death. Lesson to us not to shut out Spirit of Lord by sin, but to welcome gift of Spirit of God, and so have strength (Comforter), life, peace, joy.

APPLICATION

Crush sin in its beginnings lest it destroy us body and soul. Story of the whole Bible is that the righteous God chooses righteous people for His work. It is our honour to share in His work (2 Cor. vi. 1). Wilful sin spoils it. "My duty towards God is to fear Him," *i.e.* to be afraid of spoiling His work by sin. One of the gifts of His Spirit is "holy fear" (*cf.* Confirmation Service). Pray now for that gift.

Expression Work: 1. Collect any examples from Bible of failures from sin.

2. Collect any examples from Acts of victories through holiness.

Hymn 281, A. and M., "Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us."

[*Note.*—Teacher will avoid making this story an example of God's drastic judgment on sin of lying. It is much more than that—failure due to sin. Contrast it with victories through holiness. Holiness binds us to God: Sin separates us from Him—we punish ourselves by shutting Him and His peace out of our life.]

Lesson IX. "MEN SHALL PERSECUTE YOU"

Aim. *To show how S. Luke vi. 22 was fulfilled in the Acts.*

PREPARATION

What has been the central point of the Apostles' teaching? (The Resurrection.) Ask class for the proofs so far given that our Lord was risen, *e.g.* Descent of Holy Spirit, Gift of Tongues, many conversions, miracles. Yet one sect of Jews refused to believe in any resurrection; what? (Sadducees.) Teacher will recall how they once spoke of it to our Lord (Matt. xxii. 23–32), and His reply. What would they be likely to do now? (Attack Apostles.) Why? (New teaching showed their belief untrue.) Hence their anger, followed by persecution. Read S. Matt. v. 11, S. Luke vi. 22. We are to see how this prophecy was fulfilled.

PRESENTATION

I. *Heal the Sick* (Matt. x. 8).—A long time before our Lord sent the Twelve out to preach the Gospel. Ask class for meaning of Gospel (good news). They were to *heal bodies* as well as *teach souls*. "Acts" is a further stage. Recall cripple cured, and the following attack upon Apostles. Now many more miracles (v. 12–16). Picture the stir in the cities, the news of the Risen Lord spreading as miracles were wrought. Christ's promises fulfilled. Think of gladness of friends of sick at their restoration. Then a different scene—quite a contrast—the Jewish rulers "filled with jealousy," a terrible picture of men plotting to overthrow our Lord's work. Read Acts v. 17–28. Apostles seized by soldiers, perhaps while teaching, perhaps after day's work was ended.

II. *SS. Peter and John before Sanhedrim.*—Let class give in their own words the substance of verses 19–25. Call this "a marvellous escape"! A proof to Sadducees of the power of the Risen Lord! Yet they heeded it not—hard-hearted, would not believe. Picture astonishment of assembled Council, no prisoners, then the message—"in the Temple"; then re-arrest without violence. Why? What would people do? At last prisoners in Court, charged. Class will read again verse 28. Two accusations: (1) Disobedience to Council; (2) Stirring up people against priests (*cf.* Matt. xxvii. 25, note words used and compare with verse 28).

III. *Their Defence.*—Read Acts v. 29–32. Get the children to see that this is the Christian Creed. It speaks of all Three Persons of the

Holy Trinity and their work for men. Question upon the three sections of the Apostles' Creed, of Whom each section speaks. Finally S. Peter speaks of the Church as a "witness," with the Holy Ghost, to the truth. Then note verse 30. What effect would this Creed have on the Sadducees? Which sect would oppose them? (Pharisees who believed in a resurrection.)

IV. *Gamaliel's Advice.*—Read v. 33–39. Notice that Gamaliel is a Pharisee, a wise teacher. We shall hear of him later. What does he speak of? What is his argument? (Anything not "of God" will fail.) We know nothing of Theudas; Judas was founder of the Zealots (Simon Zelotes, an apostle, was a Zealot). Is Gamaliel's argument quite good? Or does it tell only half the truth? We have a duty towards good and evil. If a thing is good, we must support it; if evil, oppose it.

V. *The Result* (v. 40–42).—Agreement in the Council. Notice the subsequent actions: (1) the beating, (2) the command. Both were useless. Why? *Cf.* Luke vi. 22. So Apostles rejoiced at their shame; it was like the shame of the Cross. How? Their work was "of God"; so they preached the more fervently. Would Sadducees have "rejoiced" had they been treated so? Why not? Only the Risen Christ could give men such power of faith and love. Read i. 8 and John xvi. 33.

APPLICATION

No Cross, no Crown.—Our Lord's work met with mockery, crown of thorns, cross. What might His disciples expect then? What had He said about taking up cross? (Matt. x. 38). No possible escape from cross if we do our work for Christ. Christian religion always contains the cross! We must expect it, carry it bravely but humbly—no showing off, for this is pride. *Cf.* boy or girl who follows our Lord's example in school, factory, workshop, office. Friends often make fun, tease, mock—forms of persecution. Must be ready to meet this, but in strength of Christ. Think how Apostles gained it. How must we gain it? Persecution is a *sign* that faith is true and real, and a *test* to see if we are the same. Must be loyal to our creed: say a silent prayer to be firm. We shall know meaning of the blessing if we remain faithful.

Expression Work: 1. Write out v. 29–32, and compare it with Apostles' Creed.

2. Compare persecution of the Apostles with that of our Lord.

Hymn 263, A. and M., "Take up thy cross, the Saviour said."

Lesson X. THE ORDERING OF DEACONS

Aim. *To show that the Church still keeps to Apostolic practice in "ordering" deacons.*

PREPARATION

Ask class to describe how a deacon is dressed in church? What marks him off from a priest? Stole over one shoulder. (Greek *stolē* = dress, garment, now scarf worn by clergy, symbolising yoke of Christ.) What parts of worship cannot he say? He cannot consecrate in the Holy Communion, pronounce Absolution, or give the Benediction. Look up Prayer Book at "Ordering of Deacons" and see terms of his commission, questioning upon them. Explain that word deacon = a servant, a helper. Then let class tell how a deacon is ordained nowadays, and say that this is exactly what took place in Apostolic times. Read Acts vi. 1–14.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Growing Church at Jerusalem.*—Recall the "boldness" of the Apostles. What was the last number given? (iv. 4). Church growing daily, many poor, a few rich, all Jews—some Grecian Jews, most of Palestine, of Jerusalem. Among them were poor widows. Remember what was said of the charity of the Church (Lesson V). Note now how it was administered daily (vi. 1). But some complained. Why? Which section?

II. *Serving Tables.*—Read and explain verse 2. "The word" = preaching the Gospel of Jesus. "Serve tables" = attend to details of organisation. Why could they not do this? Church too many for a few men to attend to every individual, his bodily wants as well as his spiritual. Which are more important?

III. *Seven Men of Honest Report.*—Note their qualifications: (1) good reputations; (2) full of the Holy Ghost (*i.e.* of saintly life); (3) full of wisdom (*i.e.* practical men who knew people's needs and could find the means of supplying them). The Church as a whole was to test them and choose them. Why cannot this be done now? (Yet something of the kind is still done; a "Si quis" notice is read in the parish church where a deacon has lived before his ordination asking anyone who has objections to forward them to the Bishop who is to ordain him.) Read names of first deacons—so important an office that all their names are given.

IV. *Their Ordination.*—The Apostles were to "appoint" them—not the people. Why? They only had the power of ordination.

Who has this power now? The Bishops. How do Bishops ordain? How did they obtain this power? Speak of the meaning of "Apostolic Succession." We believe in an "Apostolic Church"; the authority given to Bishops to ordain is one meaning of this phrase. Read again verse 6. The men had been chosen, tested, and now were to be ordained. *Cf.* the choice and examination of deacons to-day before ordination. Now note how the Apostles ordained—the same kind of service to-day. Let class open Prayer Book and show that the service takes the same form. Picture an ordination, its solemnity, many people present, the service, the dress before and after (stole).

V. *Stephen and Philip.*—We shall hear of two of these first deacons again. Who? We hear of one of them at once. Who? What does his name mean? (Crown.) Mentioned first because he is first to win a "crown of glory." Read now of his preparation for it—his faith and power used for his work. What was that work? (Refer to verse 1—to minister to the widows; verse 8, healing.) As with Apostles, his work grew quickly: verses 9, 10 tell of another kind of work which he quickly found. The "synagogues" were those of foreign Jews. Note their opposition, and S. Stephen's success in argument. Then briefly refer to S. Philip's work in Samaria as a preparation for Lesson XII. Return finally to S. Stephen and show that his fate was to meet with persecution as the Apostles did—a sign that Jesus was with His servant. Notice the plot and his betrayal, and compare him with our Lord.

APPLICATION

Which order of ministers did Stephen belong to? What other orders are there? From whom do these orders descend? (Apostles.) What do we say in the Creed about this? Why were deacons first ordained? Have still this work to do. What does Prayer Book say about it? How were they ordained? How are they ordained now? What characters were they to have? How do Bishops know to-day the characters of deacons? Why are these seven names given? What do we say in the "Duty towards my Neighbour" about "spiritual pastors"? Read and explain this. How can we act like "the multitude" in Acts? Pray for clergy. When? Speak of "Ember Days," and read the first "Ember Collect," asking class to use it.

Expression Work: Write out, as fully as you can, the work of a Bishop, Priest, and Deacon respectively.

Hymn 352, A. and M., "Christ is gone up; yet ere He pass'd."

Lesson XI. THE MAN WITH THE FACE OF AN ANGEL

Aim. *To teach the practical lessons of S. Stephen's life and death.*

PREPARATION

Who was the chief of the deacons? What was his work? Picture him going to his office (perhaps in S. Mark's house; why? "upper room" there, where Apostles met), then taking list of names and addresses of the poor widows of the Grecian Jews, together with alms to be distributed, his journey into poor quarters of Jerusalem to find them. What would he do, talk of, say to them? Then picture his return to office, making up accurate accounts, and departure home. Parallel it as far as possible with life of young man to-day—business-like, attentive to duty, kindly. If class is old enough speak briefly of their own business-life; if younger, of school-life and duties. Let us think of one such day in S. Stephen's life—say the day before his martyrdom.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Stephen's Day's Work.*—(*a*) *Prayer.* Before he goes to work one important thing. What? Morning Prayer. What will he ask for? Let class suggest—help of Holy Spirit for work, zeal to do uninteresting things, courage to face difficulties, patience with grumblers, faithfulness to do work as under God's eye: Whose work was it? (Our Lord's.) Same with our work to-day—all true work is His. Pray regularly to do it properly before you go out in morning.

(*b*) *Work.*—Not always interesting; some might complain—they had already complained of the Apostles even. But he had been put in charge of it and would do it properly. Why? Great lesson for us.

(*c*) *Prayer.*—Then think of return home; what would he do? What would he say? Class will suggest—offer day's work to God, ask Him to accept it for Christ's sake, to pardon its faults, bless it to others. Must have been a man of prayer; no saint can do without that.

(*d*) *Leisure.*—All have spare time. What does class do with it? Let them tell teacher their use of leisure hours. Let us see what S. Stephen did. Found he had a great gift of wisdom and speech. What gifts has class? How are they used? How would S. Stephen use his gift? Read vi. 7–10. See the governing thought in his life, in work and leisure, "I must serve my King." Every gift must be used for Him.

II. *S. Stephen's Witness.*—Read vi. 11–15. Let class tell story of the speech, the listening people, the enemies, the attack. Now brought before judges on charge of blasphemy. Explain meaning. Compare charges made against our Lord (Matt. xxvi. 59–61). S. Stephen "persecuted for righteousness' sake" (Lesson IX). Who had foretold this? Picture the scene graphically—judges, witnesses, the young prisoner, the charge read out, all eyes upon him. What shall he reply? Let class suggest the answers he might make. Teacher will have studied S. Stephen's speech carefully at home, will now summarise it as below, and ask class to read it during the week as an outline "History of the Jews." The summary also might be written out on blackboard or paper beforehand :—

1. Abraham called, promises given to nation.
2. Joseph rejected by brethren (type of Christ).
3. Moses foretold the coming of "another prophet."
4. Jews rejected Moses, whom God had sent.
5. They rejected other prophets sent by God.
6. They rejected Jesus also; but He lives at God's right hand.
7. For I see Him there in Majesty.

III. *S. Stephen's Martyrdom.*—Note particularly vi. 15. *Cf.* S. Stephen with Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 29). He had gained his angel-face from communion with his Lord, not only now, but while he did his work and said his daily prayers (see also iv. 13—life and look). Then pass on to the death by stoning, noting particularly Saul of Tarsus. Latter never forgot this (xxii. 20); though he took no active part, it must have made deep impression.

APPLICATION

People who have to do disagreeable work often make a trouble of it, and their trouble shows in their faces. S. Stephen made a joy of it. How? Right spirit, prayer, energy, zeal. No doubt had trying times, but his character and determination made him happy in doing all he could for our Lord in the best possible way. Our work must be like that. Then his courage—what a lesson. He did not like to die any more than we like to suffer small things for Christ. Collect for S. Stephen's Day.

Expression Work : 1. In what ways is S. Stephen like our Lord?
2. Why should S. Stephen's martyrdom be given at such length in Acts?

Hymn 65, A. and M., "First of Martyrs, Thou Whose name."

Lesson XII. PHILIP THE TEACHER

Aim. *To show that every convert to the faith was admitted to the Church by Holy Baptism.*

PREPARATION

Recall Lesson X, and how the work of S. Stephen grew—ministry, healing, argument. Now we see how the second deacon's work grew also. Picture him at work in Jerusalem, fulfilling his ministry to the widows, supporting the Apostles, helping S. Stephen until the latter's death. Then read Acts viii. 1–4, and show map indicating Samaria as one of the places to which the persecuted Christians went. Recall our Lord's interview with the woman of Samaria, and its result (John iv. 39–42). Samaritans ready for receiving the Word. S. Philip goes down there—a few Jewish Christians to look after probably, then Samaritans to be brought into the Church. Read Acts viii. 5–13.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Samaritan Converts.*—Give the quotation, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." God sent the persecution to bring a blessing to others outside Jerusalem. If this persecution had not scattered them, if S. Stephen had not been martyred, the Church would have been much slower growing. Recall Acts i. 8. Notice that Philip has same powers as S. Stephen—power to heal and to teach. Note the joy of the Samaritans, their readiness. Show how the "unity" given by the Holy Spirit is working. Before this "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." Enmity had existed between them since the rebuilding of the Temple when Samaritans had attacked Jewish builders and hindered work (see Ezra iv.). Now a Jew preaches to them of Christ, unites them to Him, and to all other Christians. ("The Communion of Saints.")

II. *Simon Magus the Sorcerer.*—He is mentioned here to show that Philip had an enemy, raised up by Satan to oppose our Lord's work. Notice what is said of him—evidently a cunning man, using his skill wrongly for gain. Might have done great work for God, but simply wished to gain power of working wonders. Became a Christian from a wrong motive. The rest (verse 12) were good Christians who meant to live the life which Christians ought to live.

III. *How S. Philip made Christians.*—It is important for the teacher to show from the account the two points: (1) all those who desired to be Christians had to be baptized (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20); the Church has never left out baptism; (2) this sacrament is administered here by a deacon (see Prayer Book, "The Ordering of Deacons," Question 5, "It appertaineth, &c." and thus show that Church continues this). Teacher will further explain that in case of great necessity, when the clergy cannot come, anyone can baptize. The members of the class should be asked what they would do if this duty fell to them to carry out. Teach by supposing the case of a sick child about to die and no time to send for clergyman—prepare basin of water, pour some on child three times, give name, and say words required. This should be made a practical instruction, and class should be allowed to ask questions upon it afterwards.

APPLICATION

The Church goes out to the world, following her Lord's command. She is never a stay-at-home Church. Always anxious to find new members—missionary. This is the first step on a journey which she makes to "all nations." Picture stone thrown into still pond—ripple begins, spreads to sides. Like spread of Church. Stone is persecution. First ripple goes to Samaria. God has many ways of spreading Gospel, but always wants *people* to carry it. Philip an example for us in his energy, faith, zeal. Great honour. Wins first people outside Judæa. Each something to do for him. We do not know how much good our prayers and alms do for work abroad. Impossible to say. Story of missionary in India—people in a certain village quickly became Christians—not due to missionary—he had no special gifts. Later he found reason—an old lady at home had prepared his way there by twenty years of prayer for that village to be Christian. We can do same thing. No doubt Apostles had prayed for Samaria often (our Lord had spoken of it, i. 8). Now Philip goes, the Holy Spirit is with him, and he wins great victory for Christ. He was not an Apostle. We may not have great wealth, talents, office, but we have to do what we can to work for the coming of God's Kingdom.

Expression Work: 1. Find all the instances you can of Holy Baptism in the Acts.

2. Explain what you would do if no clergyman could be found and you had to baptize a dying baby.

Hymn 360, A. and M., "Thou, Whose Almighty Word."

Lesson XIII. CONFIRMATION IN SAMARIA

Aim. *To show that all baptized people should prepare their hearts for Confirmation.*

PREPARATION

Ask class for a description of how candidates are prepared nowadays for Confirmation—notice of time given in church, names taken, classes held by clergy, special time of thought and prayer. Why? What Gift is to be given? Who prepare candidates? Clergy instruct them, but cannot confirm. Why not? Bishops only can do that. Let class suggest why, leading up to the fact that the Apostles only could confirm. Then pass on to Confirmation Service—visit of Bishop; clergy, and candidates present; then Confirmation. Find same things in Acts viii. 14–25. (Compare Lesson XXXV.)

PRESENTATION

I. *The Apostles at Jerusalem.*—Recall story of Philip's mission to Samaria. What had taken place? Baptism of converts. What was still to be done? Confirmation. Picture Jerusalem as the "cathedral" city, Bishop's seat (Latin, *cathedra*) there, and Samaria as a parish. Apostles at Jerusalem would be the Twelve. SS. Peter and John then sent in name of all the Church. So to-day the Bishop comes in Church's name.

II. *The Order of Confirmation.—First* prayer. *Cf.* the Bishop's prayer before confirming, in the Prayer Book. Let class read it, and then ask what Bishop asks for. *Second*, the laying on of hands. *Cf.* Prayer Book, "Defend, O Lord," &c. Thus show: (1) how highly important this rite of Confirmation is; (2) that the Church to-day does the same thing as the Apostles; (3) that all the Apostles believed in it, and all the newly baptized Christians received it. Emphasize strongly upon class that every Christian must receive confirmation, and ask what Prayer Book says in "Office for Public Baptism"—address to godparents. How careful we ought to be in preparing for Confirmation when the Apostles, who had been with our Lord, and doubtless had learnt from Him, took such pains about it. No trouble too much for them; we ought to be willing to take same trouble.

III. *The Unfit Candidate.*—Recall Simon Magus, why he had been

with Philip. A hypocrite, quite unready for Confirmation, had not prepared at all. Perhaps Philip would not permit him to be presented—clergy sometimes have to do that now, unfortunately. Then Simon showed his true colours. How? Read S. Peter's answer carefully (verses 20–23). Note particularly "thy heart is not right." Simon had taken no trouble. Sad thing for S. Peter to do—yet quite right. The stern reply warned Simon of sin and its result (*cf.* Lesson VIII).

Briefly speak of sin of simony—name given to it from Simon Magus—buying or attempting to buy any "gift of God," any office in the Church, for money. What a sad thing to be remembered only as giving a name to a sin.

IV. *His Request to S. Peter.*—No real repentance—sorrow for sin—shown. Only fear of punishment. Contrast with S. Peter's own repentance of his sin of denial his exhortation to Simon (verse 22); its failure because Simon was hardened, unspiritual. Tell briefly that Simon became a heretic, a teacher of falsehood, and continued his evil work for a long time deceiving many.

V. *The Apostolic Church in Samaria.*—Verse 25 tells of an apostolic mission, very successful, full of promise for the future, fulfilling our Lord's command. It should be remembered that these people were a mixed race—not real Jews. The success among them would be remembered later when those who were not Jews at all, but Gentiles, were to be brought into the Kingdom.

APPLICATION

The teacher will dwell upon the two points: (i) the importance of Confirmation in the Early Church; (ii) the care with which we ought to prepare for receiving so great a Gift as that of the Holy Spirit. Teach the importance of beginning to prepare early in life. Urge that the Holy Spirit comes to hearts that are ready to receive Him. Beware of bad preparation. It cannot bring a blessing. The Holy Spirit comes to be our Divine Companion if we are ready to welcome Him into our hearts.

Expression Work: 1. Find any other passages in the New Testament referring to the laying on of hands.

2. Write out "Defend, O Lord," &c., and make it into a prayer for yourself.

Hymn 280, A. and M., "Thine for ever! God of love."

Lesson XIV. THE FIRST AFRICAN CHRISTIAN

Aim. *To give interest in the spread of African missions.*

PREPARATION

Does class know anything of Dr. Livingstone? Ever heard of Universities' Mission to Central Africa and its work? What coloured men there? Why should missionaries go to them? (Matt. xxviii. 19). [Any story of a black Christian, his faithfulness and love of Christ, will enforce point of their reception of Christianity. Have we any duty to them?] What can we do? (Pray, give, study, go out.) We are going to speak of the first black Christian, made by Philip the deacon, not an Apostle. We honour Philip for this work. Read Acts viii. 26–40.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Queen of the South.*—Read to the class Matt. xii. 42, or Luke xi. 31. Picture the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon in your own words (1 Kings x. 1–13). Perhaps something of her vision of God remained among her people after all these ages. If so, it was God's preparation of that piece of Africa for Christ. Then picture the Ethiopian eunuch setting out, long journey to Jerusalem. Anxiety to learn, probably made a proselyte to Jewish religion, attends Temple services, then buys a roll of prophet Isaiah (if time note nature, cost, &c.) to learn more of God. Now going home to take his knowledge there and spread it. A great man, chariot, slave driving, eunuch reading, suddenly interrupted.

II. *Philip the Teacher.*—Recall his work in Samaria, use of his gift of teaching there. Now God finds a new use for it with Ethiopian eunuch. Command received from angel to go on Jerusalem-Gaza road. Show the map. Strange command—from cities to desert. S. Philip must have wondered why. Like Abraham told to leave his home, showed simple faith, did it, won his reward. What? First African Christian, likely to be an influence on his return. Why? (27). Picture the man reading (Isa. liii.). Tell class to read this chapter at home—imitate the eunuch. But these words (32, 33), how difficult for him to understand, not knowing Jesus. See how God prepares the way for His work to be done. No better text could be found. Let class tell its meaning. All that hidden from reader. Then the Holy Spirit speaks to Philip (29, 30). Ask class to tell conversation of Philip and eunuch in their own words. What each would say. So instruction goes on.

III. *The Eunuch's Request.*—What would Philip speak of last?

(Risen Christ dwelling in heaven.) Would tell of command (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20) to baptize. When given? Then eunuch's request, Philip's answer. Eunuch believes and is baptized. *Cf.* Lesson IV. Teacher will call attention to method of baptism by immersion. Church still orders it. Read the two rubrics in "Office for Public Baptism of Infants" after "Name this child." Correct class if they say that minister "sprinkles" water—(danger if none touch child, then baptism invalid). Explain that baptism is "a washing." Church follows still the practice of Apostolic days of washing, by "pouring" water upon person. In some churches bath for immersion (*e.g.* Lambeth Parish Church, St. Mary's, Southampton), as well as Font. What does Holy Baptism make us? (Catechism, Ans. 2.) Did same things for eunuch. Still remained a Christian though he had to return to Africa.

IV. *The Separation.*—Having now the grace of the Holy Spirit, eunuch had no longer need of Philip's help. What took place? (Read viii. 39, 40.) Think of this first African Christian. He would often think of the wonder of his baptism, speak of it when he returned—a lesson to us to do the same. Philip's work not ended either. The Christian's work is never ended in this world; always can find others to bring to Christ. Both men would do this, and spread the Gospel, relying upon God's grace to help them. Picture spread of Christianity in small bit of Africa. *Cf.* the parable of the leaven (Matt. xiii. 33). A troubled history, but active missions to-day. Talk about Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Church Missionary Society, Universities' Mission, or any mission supported by parish, with maps to show work still being done.

APPLICATION

Ask class to attend Baptism service, and there renew their own baptismal promises as the questions are put to godparents. Emphasize these promises and their meaning—Repent, Believe, Obey. All have promised them. Are we keeping them as we ought? Do we pray to keep them? Only "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" can enable us to do so. Do we really want others to do the same? Must pray for them too. Let us pray to-night for Christian people in Africa, that they may be true to their baptismal vows.

Expression Work: 1. Map of Africa marked with mission work.

2. Give two or three reasons why all Christians must support missions. [Encourage children to do this themselves and at home; deal with answers brought.]

Hymn 362, A. and M., "Lord, her watch Thy Church is keeping."

Lesson XV. THE GREATEST MISSIONARY

Aim. *To show that God called S. Paul to be an Apostle.*

PREPARATION

Show Palestine, Judæa, Jerusalem, then Samaria, Africa on map of world. What has been done so far by Church? Small bodies of Christians formed in Palestine and Samaria; one man in Africa. Who? He will do work there. What work? Every Christian must be a missionary—part of his religion. Rest of world still waiting for Christ and His Church. Show South Europe and Asia Minor. What empire? (Roman.) All heathen, old religions disbelieved, gods given up, waiting for "the unknown God" (Lesson XXXIII). He is preparing a man to do work of telling world about Him, and also preparing Roman world to receive Him (Lesson LI, and note Roman centurion and others in Gospels and Acts). Who is the man?

PRESENTATION

I. *Saul the Young Man.*—Show city of Tarsus; explain that there a Jewish colony had settled many years before; some had become citizens of Empire, great honour, had grown wealthy through trade. Member of one such family was Saul; cultured, Pharisee, son of a Jew who was Roman citizen (xxii. 3, 27; xxiii. 6). Two things to be proud of: (1) Jewish religion; (2) Roman citizenship. Grows up; sent to Jerusalem. Why? *Cf.* young man to-day going to theological college. Teacher's name Gamaliel, Jewish rabbi, wise. Saul had heard of Jesus, His crucifixion, resurrection; doubtless discussed it all with teacher; refused to believe. Had heard S. Stephen; perhaps argued with him about Jesus; angry with him, present at martyrdom. What does he do? (vii. 58). But could not get S. Stephen out of his mind, yet obstinately kept own view. Persecuted Church in ignorance of God's will. Read Acts ix. 1–9.

II. *Saul the Persecutor.*—What event had driven Christians away from Jerusalem? (S. Stephen's death, viii. 1–4.) Where had they gone? Show map. Saul follows them. Picture journey on foot or horseback, with letters from High Priest, thinking of Jesus, Stephen, and other Christians. Near Damascus, then a miracle.

III. *His Wonderful Conversion.*—Let class describe events in order, light, voice, blindness—lion become a lamb, subdued by the gentle Lamb of God. Eyes blind for three days, while spirit begins to see truth. Read Acts ix. 10–16.

IV. *God's Call through Ananias the Disciple.*—How well God had prepared for this—Ananias had a vision. Let class describe it, and tell his objection. Learn verses 15, 16. Then notice obedience of Ananias, his very words recorded. Read ix. 17, 18. [Note S. Luke's description of the cure—a doctor's description—probably obtained from Ananias himself. Recall carefulness as historian. Perhaps interested in S. Paul's eyes, Lessons XXIX, XLI.] What followed upon Repentance and Faith? Baptism. S. Paul like a child, made indeed "the child of God." The persecutor now a disciple.

V. *Saul the Chosen Vessel.*—How speedily he learns of Jesus, and how anxious to serve Him. No half measures with such a man. His conversion complete; begins work for Christ in very place of intended persecution. First congregations are Jews there.

APPLICATION

Great day in history of Church; still remembered; think of churches dedicated; see January 25 in Calendar. Wonderful day in S. Paul's own life; never forgot it. Had seen Jesus in glory. Still pressed on to grow more worthy of Him. Might call S. Paul "a man with a mission." Every Christian has a mission. S. Paul unselfish in goodness—wanted to share his knowledge. A hero, who began where his sins were forgiven. Not easy to preach in Damascus; no easier than for us to live a straight life in office or workshop; no easier than for us to say a word for Jesus when others scoff or say wrong things in our presence. Christ has called us in Baptism to be His "soldiers and servants," just as He called S. Paul. Read Collect for Conversion of S. Paul.

Expression Work: 1. Read Isaiah vi., and write out the words of the call to Isaiah and to S. Paul.

2. Draw a map of the Holy Land, showing places where Christian Churches were.

Hymn 405, A. and M., "The Shepherd now was smitten."

Lesson XVI. TRAINING A MISSIONARY

Aim. *To show how God prepared S. Paul for his work.*

PREPARATION

Suppose member of class hopes one day to be missionary. What will you do? Tell clergy, receive advice, perhaps see Bishop. Still much to do. Useless to go without training—life in foreign land difficult. Class will suggest what missionary should know—Message, something of natives, language, customs, kind of land, climate, how to live there. Must know his Master Who gives him message. How learn about Him? (Prayer, instruction, study, thought.) Where will he be trained? (College.) Teacher might speak of Church Missionary Society Colleges, S. Augustine's, Dorchester, &c. After that "sent out" (= missionary) by Church to preach Christ. How? (Ordained, dismissed, Acts xiii. 2, 3.) Spoke of a great missionary last week. Who?

PRESENTATION

I. *The Beginning of Training.*—Read silently Acts ix. 19. Where did he begin? Who first taught him? (Christians, *cf.* godparents and their duties. Public Baptism, address.) What did he do when taught? (Preached. *Cf.* lay reader in mission church, often preparing for Ordination.) Read to end of verse 22.

II. *In the Wilderness: Preparing.*—After an apprentice has learnt trade goes as "improver," *e.g.* tailors, barbers, iron workers. Similarly S. Paul. Read Gal. i. 13–24. Teacher will ask what verses 13–15 tell. (Last lesson.) Now 16, 17 tell of "improver." What does "called" tell of? (Conversion.) "Flesh and blood" = men. S. Paul's teaching was special, from Christ. Before or after Ascension? (After.) Where? (Arabia, probably Mount Sinai district.) Teacher will question on former events there (Moses given Law, Elijah taught). Dwell on purpose of desert life—repentance, prayer, study leading to "revelation." Describe method. (Study 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2 Cor. xii. 1–4 beforehand with commentary, and ask class to look at these after lesson, meanwhile giving such information and explanation as seems fitting.) How long there? (Part of "three years" following conversion.) What was his purpose there? (Prayer, learning message, receive "revelation of Jesus

Christ" as Messiah and Saviour of world.) *Cf.* S. John Baptist, missionary at college.

III. *In Jerusalem: Accepted.*—Now almost ready for work. Goes to Jerusalem. Why? Central Church must know him as Apostle = "witness of Resurrection" (i. 22). How is he this? Has seen Risen Christ. Read ix. 23–25, to find how visit to Jerusalem is brought about—preaching at Damascus, plot, escape. Fear of Church there. Why? Persecutor. Now accepted. Who was the instrument? Barnabas. See now what S. Paul did at Jerusalem. Read Gal. i. 18, 19. Why Peter? Chief of Apostles. Why James? (Head of Jerusalem Church: xii. 17; xv. 13.) We find other work done in Acts ix. 29. Second plot follows, like that at Damascus. Where may he go now? See Acts xxii. 17–21. Risen Christ saves him for future work. Where? Among Gentiles; Gal. i. 21, and Acts ix. 30, tell us of journey *back to native city Tarsus.*

[*Note.*—Teacher will show map—Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Syria, Tarsus. Such a map might well be drawn on paper before lesson for teacher's study and class use. Sequence of events is :—

1. Conversion and first preaching—Damascus; Jewish plot; escape (Acts ix. 23–28).

2. Jerusalem visit—to Peter and James (Gal. i. 18–19); preaching; plot (Acts ix. 29); vision (Acts xxii. 17–21).

3. Escape to Tarsus through Syria (Gal. i. 21; Acts ix. 30).

If class is slow or backward, teacher will piece these narratives together into a story by aid of map, describing them graphically, using questions to anticipate probable course of events, *e.g.* plots, escapes, talk at Jerusalem.]

APPLICATION

Summarise Conversion, training, acceptance. Risen Christ did it all. He is preparing us, as He prepared S. Paul, for our life's work. Our lives must mean something for God's work. We are His instruments. Be ready to live seriously now for God. We are His missionaries in the world. He is training us. Be earnest in prayer, study, thought. Do work gladly despite hindrances and difficulties.

Expression Work: 1. Write brief account of S. Paul's life from Tarsus (beginning) to Tarsus (again).

2. Tell story of S. Paul's adventures so far.

Hymn 406, A. and M., "We sing the glorious conquest."

Lesson XVII. LYDDA AND JOPPA

Aim. *To teach that each can find some work to do for the Church of Christ.*

PREPARATION

We shall speak to-day of a Bishop's visit to his churches. Teacher will begin by asking what chief church in diocese is called (cathedral), and then explain that this word means "seat"; the bishop's throne there. Then pass to parish churches. Bishop visits them to see their work. Word Bishop = overseer. Encourages them, advises them, regulates them in their work. Apostles did same thing. Recall persecution following S. Stephen's death, churches scattered, faith spread, "parishes" formed away from Jerusalem. Apostles must visit these and see work. S. Peter goes.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Sabbath rest of the Church.*—Recall Genesis story of Creation, six days of work, then rest. "New creation" (what is it?) now has rest from persecution. Time of growth and development, like the rest of the first creation. Read silently Acts ix. 31–35. Opportunity for deepening faith and love of those already Christians; also for teaching others. Ask meaning of "edified" (built up).

II. *S. Peter at Lydda: the Healing of Æneas.*—Show map of Palestine. Picture the "parishes" dotted here and there—all dependent on Jerusalem, the central Church. Two names given—Lydda, Joppa. Imagine discussion in Jerusalem among Apostles as to who should go. Why S. Peter? (Lessons IV and XIII.) Think of journey to Lydda, one of the parishes, and what he would find on arrival—busy Christian work of all kinds. *Cf.* parish organisations to-day, Church of England Men's Society, mothers' meetings, classes for instruction, &c. Then picture the sick Æneas. Tell how to-day Church prays for sick, visits them, consoles them with ministrations, teaches them to use sickness well by praying for others. Æneas evidently a good Christian who had profited by his sickness. Then tell of miracle and its results. Tell Bishop of London's story of sick girl anointed.

III. *His Visit to Joppa: Raising of Dorcas.*—S. Peter passes on. Show route on map, to sea-coast. Again same work being done. Tell why S. Peter goes—sent for by two messengers. Read ix. 36–43. Then let class tell story in their own words. What will S. Peter do? Copy his Master. What similar events would he remember our Lord

to have done? (Raising of Jairus' daughter, widow's son at Nain, Lazarus.) Read also to class Matt. x. 8. Ask how the Church would speak about Dorcas, her work, her kind deeds, her charity, how sorry all were, what a great loss she would be. Everybody mourning. Then suddenly the sadness is changed to joy. Why? How was the miracle wrought? (By prayer—not by S. Peter's own power. *Cf.* Elijah's miracle, 1 Kings xvii. 17–24.) What would this miracle prove? Christ still alive; doing same work as when He lived on earth. (Refer to John xi. 25.) Ask for result of miracle. Then go on to picture S. Peter in the Eastern house of Simon. Every Jew learnt a trade—S. Paul a tentmaker. Think of welcome Simon would give his Bishop; the help and comfort S. Peter would be to the Church which probably met at Simon's house. Recall the Upper Room in Mary's house at Jerusalem, and compare. First Christian Churches were in private houses. Why? Let class suggest reasons—few people in congregations; many poor, could not afford to build; gave Christians idea of a family all united; fear of persecution, &c. Picture an early Christian service in such circumstances. Then ask for reasons why later on Christians would want to build churches? To give the best to God; God's house; increased numbers; more wealthy people—still a family. *Cf.* Eph. iii. 8–19.

APPLICATION

1. *A Bishop's work to-day.*—Bishops still visit parishes like S. Peter did. Why? Class will suggest—confirmation, meetings to encourage good works, meetings for church business, &c. Our Church still "Apostolic" in this sense. (*Cf.* Creed.) All ought to take an interest in what goes on in the parish, in the people, their work for Christ. How friendly early Christians were! What trouble they took! Long journeys, prayers, praise for good work, kindness and sympathy everywhere. Great respect paid to the church officers, and particularly to clergy, and the Bishop most of all.

2. *Our share in the Work.*—We must not stand by and let others do work, but must help as we can. Teacher will think of parish work for class, either now or later in life, *e.g.* visiting others and bringing them to church; distribution of magazines, notices, bills; becoming Sunday School teachers, district visitors, singing in choir, &c. Many ways to help: find something you can do, and do it thoroughly.

Expression Work: 1. Give an account of how the Church helps the sick in these days.

2. Tell of any miracles wrought in answer to prayer.

Hymn 368, A. and M., "Thou, to Whom the sick and dying."

Lesson XVIII. "CLEAN AND UNCLEAN"

Aim. *To teach that all Christians have a duty towards missionary work.*

PREPARATION

Recall Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. "All the world." Church has to do this. How far has it reached as yet in Acts? Judæa, Samaria. Where else to go? (i. 8). We know of one man in Africa. Rest of world untouched; but waiting. Apostles not quite ready. What nation did they belong to? What did Jews think of themselves? Of other nations? *Cf.* John iv. 9. Jewish nation had to be a blessing to "all the nations of the earth." Who said so? To whom? (Gen. xii. 3). So our Lord told Apostles to go "into all the world"—to carry the blessing.

PRESENTATION

I. *Christ's earlier Teaching.*—Apostles had received some teaching about Gentiles. Teacher will briefly gather up some or all of the following points:—

1. First sermon at Nazareth (Luke iv. 25–27), God worked for Gentiles as well as Jews.

2. Miracles wrought for Gentiles—Canaanitish woman, Centurion's servant.

3. Parables spoken about call of Gentiles—Two Sons (Matt. xxi. 28–32), Wicked Husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33–46).

4. Command given to go to "all nations" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

Further teaching necessary, given to Apostles by Holy Spirit. Read Acts x. 1–23.

II. *S. Peter's vision.*—The places of the two events—Cæsarea, Joppa. Cæsarea, Roman capital of Palestine, garrison, ruler [Lesson XLIII]. Centurion in army—note character (x. 2) compare Romans spoken of in Gospels and Acts. Heathens please God by obeying conscience. Let class tell story of angel's visit to Cornelius, and the latter's action, in their own words. How ready he shows himself to be. Now Joppa event, next day. Who is there? What does he do? Draw Eastern house with flat roof. Note how God uses right moment—S. Peter hungry, vision of things to eat. Class will tell story. Explain meaning clean and unclean, and show how God makes opportunity for men of all nations to enter Christian Church—Jews and Gentiles. One special point to notice—Gentiles not to be "cleansed" by passing

through Jewish religion to become Christians, but to be admitted on equal terms with Jews. Christ died to take away "the sins of the whole world." Faith in Him was to make a bond of brotherhood between "all nations." S. Peter did not yet understand fully (17), but the messengers made it clear (19).

III. *S. Peter and Cornelius.*—Read Acts x. 24–33. Cornelius welcomes the Apostle at city gate, tells his story in answer to request in house. Note how S. Peter was conquering Jewish prejudice in entering Gentile house. In reply S. Peter tells the Gospel story, "good tidings of peace." It is for *all* men. *Cf.* ii. 21. Class will suggest what he would be likely to say. Teacher will ask class to read sermon at home. Emphasize verses 35, 43.

IV. *The Gentile Pentecost.*—Read x. 44–48. Recall first Whitsunday, and meaning for Jews. Now same gift to Gentiles, same Spirit, same results of His coming (46). But S. Peter so certain of our Lord's intention, that he commanded Baptism. *Cf.* with teaching of the sheet let down—full admission, without Jewish ceremony of circumcision, to Christian fellowship. Baptism necessary. Notice also Lessons IV and XIV for the same teaching.

APPLICATION

God makes His Church spread through men. He could have sent revelation to Cornelius, but sent S. Peter to teach. He could now convert heathen at once, but wishes us to do it. He prepared S. Peter. He prepares us—sends us friends, people to know who want our help. We must always think God's work chiefest, be ready to do it like S. Peter. Do not despise other races; be ready to give them "good tidings of peace." Our duty to black and yellow races in missionary work. Many a black martyr for faith. Many a yellow man acting as missionary to his own people. So we must be ready to give our gifts to others. Important to recognise place of Baptism. Think of S. Peter giving it, even after descent of Holy Ghost. How important for people to-day. Recall your own baptism, and thank God as Cornelius would do for this privilege.

Expression Work: 1. Read an account of any mission to-day where this kind of work is being done by Church. (Teacher will suggest mission, and literature, in which parish is interested.)

2. Why should we strive to give Christianity to other races? How can *you* help to do it?

Hymn 217, A. and M., "Thy Kingdom come, O God."

Lesson XIX. NEITHER JEW NOR GENTILE

Aim. *To show how the Church came to recognise that through Holy Baptism God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile.*

PREPARATION

Picture a christening in Royal family, and then contrast it with one in a humble home—great difference in worldly position. Both children brought to font, both have godparents who make same promises for children, both baptized in same way, both receive same blessings from God. What? Catechism, Ans. 2. In God's sight, as members of Christ's Church, the newly baptized are equal. People of every worldly rank must alike pass through same door of Baptism into Church. Rich and poor, black and white, all made "sons of God" there (Rom. viii. 14; Eph. iv. 4–6; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27, 28). This not always understood. Even Apostles had to learn it. Recall last lesson, the Jewish pride of S. Peter broken down. Others must learn same lesson from him. He must teach them—God's way is to use us to do His work in helping others.

PRESENTATION

I. *Christ's Command: Teach all Nations.*—So Christ had commanded (Matt. xxviii. 19–20). But the Apostles needed to learn something too. What? Read Acts xi. 1–18. S. Peter returned to Jerusalem to find that his action was known. What did some of the brethren do? Began to blame him. Why? A Jew "eating with Gentiles"! *Cf.* S. John iv. 9. Probably they would have gone on to blame him for baptizing Gentiles who were not proselytes. But he interrupts them. What would he speak of? Let class suggest.

II. *S. Peter's defence of his Work.*—Analyse as follows:—

1. Incidents at Joppa—prayer, threefold vision, messengers arrive, bidding of Holy Spirit.

2. The journey—"six brethren" go as witnesses (not told before).

3. Incidents at Cæsarea—Cornelius' account, "the Gentile Pentecost," the reception of the family.

III. *In God the Peace and Unity of the Church.*—The Jewish members of the Church had nothing more to say. Why? God had brought it about. They held their peace, glorified God, thanked Him for the

"repentance unto life" given to Gentiles. What difference would this agreement make to the spread of the Church? Good for its missionary work. Gospel could now go forth without hindrance to Gentiles. They were free to enter Church without becoming Jews first. Of course other difficulties would arise later, other causes of dispute. But this first great difficulty was a triumph for the Gentiles. By Whom was it brought about? (The Holy Spirit.) Recall title of Acts, "The Gospel of the Holy Ghost." His power and wisdom were dwelling in the Church, "guiding it into all the truth" (John xvi. 13). He gave unity so that the Church might be strong to do Christ's work for the world. "Unity is strength."

APPLICATION

1. "*That they all may be one.*" Pray for unity of Church, outwardly as well as inwardly. Worship of One God in One Faith helps towards this unity. The Church's work will be done best when she realises that she is one Body, united in the one work of her Master. We ought to be grieved at her disunion. Division means weakness in work. Pray that she may have the Spirit of Unity, that all baptized may be one in worship and service. Read prayer in Accession Service, "O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. All are equal in these two things before God. Tell story of Duke of Wellington at Holy Communion in Chapel Royal. Verger called to communicants as they went to receive the Holy Sacrament, "Make way for the Duke." He replied quietly, "All are equal here."

3. New difficulties come to the Church from age to age, *e.g.* whether we ought to found native Christian Churches in heathen lands, and leave them to govern themselves; whether new Christian Churches should have clergy and services of their own, &c. Cannot answer these things at once. Must be content to wait, try experiments, ask for guidance of Holy Spirit, Who will help us as He helped Apostles.

Expression Work: 1. Find in the Gospels any incidents which show that our Lord intended that the Gentiles should come into His Kingdom.

2. Read 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27–29; Col. iii. 9–11. What do these passages teach us?

Hymn 364, A. and M., "God of grace, O let Thy light."

Lesson XX. IMPRISONMENT AND DELIVERANCE

Aim. *To teach that God preserves His servants in answer to the prayer of faith.*

PREPARATION

Recall Lesson VII, the persecution of Apostles by the chief priests; Lesson XI, the persecution of S. Stephen by Jews. Now a new persecution by King Herod. This king, known as Agrippa I, had been educated in Rome, was deceitful and treacherous. Had won Emperor's favour, and had been made King of Judea, and tetrarch of Galilee. No doubt had heard that the Church acknowledged Jesus as King, and was afraid for his own title. So would be glad to "please the Jews" by attacking Christians, and at same time make his throne secure. Read Acts xii. 1–23.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Martyred Apostle.*—The only Apostle of whose death we read in the New Testament is S. James, son of Zebedee—beheaded by the king. Little known of him. Once he asked to be Christ's courtier. This was the baptism—a "baptism of blood." Follows our Lord's path (see Matt. xx. 20–23).

II. *S. Peter in Prison.*—No reason for it, except that death of S. James "had pleased the people." Notice the security of the prison. The word "Easter" should be noted. Describe S. Peter in chains, ministry interrupted, wondering what result would be, no doubt full of prayer—a quiet time after his work for Christ. Our Lord often sends illness as a rest; He sent imprisonment in this case. Then speak of the praying Church and the value of our intercessions for others (verse 5).

III. *S. Peter set free.*—The answer to prayer (verses 7–10). How securely S. Peter sleeps! *Cf.* our Lord's sleep in the storm (Matt. viii. 23–27). His disciple can do the same, secure of his Master's presence and help. Until S. Peter is fully awake and out of danger the angel stays with him and guides him. But once he is quite safe the angel departs.

IV. *S. Peter acts for himself.*—He had time to think of the deliverance, and of the proper thing to do. Why does he go to S. Mark's house? (Upper Room—Lesson II). Think again of praying Church, of the maid Rhoda—her behaviour—and of the young man S. Mark welcoming S. Peter. Refer to 1 Pet. v. 13. S. Mark is S. Peter's

"son in the faith"—the pupil of the Apostle. Picture the two together, the gladness of both at the deliverance. Then speak of the Church, the talk of the wonderful deliverance. The James mentioned in verse 17 is "James, the Lord's brother," the head of the Jerusalem Church (see xv. 13). He wrote the Epistle of S. James.

V. *Herod's Death.*—Think of Herod's anger at failure. Then pass on to tell of his death—one of the most terrible in the Bible. All he did was of no avail to stay God's punishment. His welcoming of praise equal to God's brought the final stroke of doom. Sin brings death (Rom. vi. 23). He had lost his opportunity of repentance because he continued to harden his heart.

APPLICATION

Man's extremity is God's opportunity.—The great lesson is that God preserves His servants in answer to prayer when they cannot help themselves. Had S. Peter been able to get free by his own power no angel would have come. He could not; the Church prayed; a miracle was wrought. But when free and awake S. Peter has to do the rest for himself. God expects us to do all we can by using our own powers; He helps us to use them, supplies us with grace which helps those who are faithful in every time of need.

The Power of Intercession.—Next notice and dwell upon the security of S. Peter in consequence of (i) his own faith and trust in God, (ii) the Church's prayers for him. Teach the power of intercession. There is always somebody who needs our prayers. Intercession is the highest kind of prayer because it is unselfish. The Church imitates her Lord in interceding for her people as He did. Teach the reality of God's answer to prayers. If S. Peter had died at this time the Church would have lost its first leader, and it needed his splendid example of courage to send it forward into the world. God knew this, and granted His people's request. Notice what a great man S. Peter himself trained for the Church in S. Mark the Evangelist, whose Gospel is really S. Peter's preaching written down by S. Mark when the two were afterwards together working at Rome (Lesson XXVI).

Expression Work: 1. Find any other examples of God's answer to the prayer, "Deliver us from evil."

2. Show from any incidents in the New Testament that "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Hymn 430, A. and M., "Th' eternal gifts of Christ the King," or 291, "Oft in danger."

Lesson XXI. BARNABAS AND SAUL—THEIR FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Aim. *To show how the early Church was commanded to be a missionary Church.*

PREPARATION

Recall persecution following S. Stephen's martyrdom. Let class learn "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Tell story of some modern mission to illustrate, *e.g.* Melanesia. "Acts" prove this true several times. What examples have we had so far? Now see it once more. Read xi. 21–26.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Gospel at Antioch.*—Show map, and describe Antioch, a pleasure-loving city, important, large trade, many Jews, very wealthy. Needed Gospel. Why? What was result of Christians living there? (verse 21). Work grew quickly; probably news sent to Jerusalem with appeal for more helpers. What was result? (Barnabas sent to work there.) Let class tell what they know of him from former Lessons VIII and XVI (iv. 36, 37; ix. 27). Why would he be specially suitable? (Had been rich, knew proper use of wealth, had lived abroad, born in Cyprus, knew foreign life, men of Cyprus had taught Antioch the Gospel, also xi. 24). Why should he seek Saul for work? (Perhaps knew him at Tarsus in early life, had helped him in Jerusalem, ix. 27.) Why should S. Paul go? (Gratitude; sympathised with foreign Jews and Romans; why?) Note verse 26; "Christians" at first a nickname; now a name of great honour.

II. *Antioch helps Jerusalem.*—Jerusalem had helped Antioch; now Antioch repays. How? Let class give in their own words story of xi. 27–30. Picture kindness of these early Christians. *Cf.* iv. 34, 35. Church too large now, and too widespread to have "all things in common." Think of the joy of the two messengers, proud of their grateful Church; then of the comfort they brought, and of the gratitude of Jerusalem Church. (*N.B.*—the "elders" there. See Lesson XXIV.) Read xii. 24, 25. We shall hear of John Mark again.

III. *Antioch sends out Missionaries.*—Read xiii. 1–3. This is very important—a daughter-Church receives the honour of sending out the first missionaries to the Gentiles! Notice how the Holy Ghost has prepared for this: (1) using persecution after S. Stephen's death to spread Gospel; (2) bringing the right men together in a Church on the edge of the Gentile world. See map. Now i. 8 to be fulfilled; the Risen Christ has been at work all the time through the Holy Spirit. Contrast method of "electing" an Apostle (i. 21) with the method

of "separating" here described (xiii. 3). *Cf.* the Ember Seasons, times of fasting and prayer for those to be ordained. Church still "Apostolic" in this respect. The call comes directly from the Holy Spirit, perhaps by one of the "prophets" (verse 1). The Church has to "separate" for the Holy Spirit (xiii. 2; and ix. 15–17). The Church at Jerusalem had sent Barnabas "as far as Antioch" (xi. 22); now he and Saul are sent beyond at the direct command of the Holy Ghost (Gal. ii. 7–9).

IV. *The first Missionary journey begins* (xiii. 4–13).—Trace on map Seleucia, Cyprus (Salamis its eastern port, Paphos at western end), Perga in Pamphylia (capital of this province of Asia Minor, seven miles from coast).

(a) *In Cyprus.*—Recall that Barnabas was born here (iv. 36). Ask class to show *Salamis* on map. Many Jews, a synagogue (xiii. 5). Notice John Mark as "minister" (R.V. "attendant," see Lesson XXVI). What would S. Barnabas want to do here and in *Paphos* (map)? (Tell them of living Christ.) What events happen here? Class will tell them, teacher adding explanations; Jewish sorcerer Barjesus (Elymas = hidden knowledge) opposed; Sergius Paulus, the deputy, anxious to learn. Note verse 7, the order is "Barnabas and Saul"; then in verse 9 Saul takes Roman name *Paul* (perhaps on account of success with Sergius Paulus, or it may have been the name by which he was known by Gentiles), and order becomes "Paul and Barnabas." What does this show? (S. Paul takes the lead.) S. Paul's first miracle is to be compared with his own loss of sight, which gave him spiritual vision; he hoped it would do the same for Elymas; Lesson XV. Tradition says Elymas was restored.

(b) *At Perga.*—"Paul and his company"; note his leadership. John Mark goes home here; see Lesson XXVI for reasons. Remember title of Book, "Gospel of the Holy Ghost." He brings this about for His own good purposes.

APPLICATION

Ask class to tell what they know of founding of Christianity in Britain. We, like Antioch, have a debt to the rest of the world. Briefly show how Antioch paid it. Question on our duty (1) to the poor, (2) to heathen lands, and how we can fulfil it. Ask class to give names of Missionary Societies; speak briefly of work they do; ask for support for them.

Expression Work: 1. Draw a map showing Antioch, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Perga.

2. Tell the story of how Antioch helped Jerusalem.

Hymn 220, A. and M., "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun."

Lesson XXII. "WE TURN TO THE GENTILES"

Aim. *To show that the Holy Spirit led S. Paul to dedicate himself to work among the Gentiles.*

PREPARATION

Revise with map course of first missionary journey so far (Lesson XXI), remembering (i) change of name to Paul, (ii) latter takes leadership after Cyprus. Now show Antioch in Pisidia, nearly 100 miles from Perga, through wild desolate region inhabited by barbarous races. Jews there for purposes of trade. (Read xiii. 14.)

N.B.—Be careful to distinguish Antioch in Syria from Antioch in Pisidia.

PRESENTATION

I. *The first Sabbath in Antioch.*—The two Apostles join in the synagogue worship. Why? (Always their practice as Jews to begin with their own countrymen.) Two lessons read, 1st Law, 2nd Prophets (*cf.* our practice at Morning and Evening Prayer). Then, on invitation of ruler, S. Paul speaks. *Cf.* our Lord's sermon at Nazareth (S. Luke iv. 16–22). This is *S. Paul's first reported sermon;* very much like S. Stephen's. Notice the beginning of the latter (vii. 2) and then refer to Lesson XI. Both are outline histories of Israel, leading up to Christ as the One for Whom that history prepared the way. Analysis :—

1. God "chose" Israel at the first.
2. He "exalted" the nation.
3. He gave them judges, prophets, kings (David).
4. He raised a Saviour of David's seed.
5. He sent the Baptist to announce Him.
6. He raised Him from the dead after the Jews had crucified Him.
7. By Him "all that believe are justified," accepted by God for Christ's sake.

II. *The Result of S. Paul's Sermon* (xiii. 42, 43).—(Teacher will consult R.V.) The Jews and proselytes wanted to hear S. Paul again, followed the two Apostles, and were evidently earnest to hear more on the next Sabbath. Think how the Apostles would work during the week, explaining his teaching to all. The Gentiles came, and the Jews were jealous (xiii. 44, 45).

III. *The second Sabbath in Antioch.*—Note how different it was from the first. Noisy, quarrelsome people (Jews), opposition to S. Paul, and then Apostle speaks words of tremendous meaning and

importance. Dwell on verses 46–49. This is a new and great fulfilment of the command in S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. What would follow on belief? (*Cf.* ii. 38; viii. 12, 38; x. 47, 48.)

IV. *The Jewish Persecution.*—Recall ix. 23, the persecution at Damascus. Again a persecution by Jews who stirred up "devout and honourable women" (proselytes to Jewish religion) and the "chief men" to drive the Apostles away. Note the phrase in xiii. 51, and compare S. Matt. x. 14. Iconium is about ninety miles south-east of Antioch. *Cf.* xiii. 52 with S. John xvi. 20. The disciples, *i.e.* the new converts who remained faithful, rejoiced through the gift of the Spirit of Joy, the Holy Ghost. God gave success to the mission despite hindrances, just as He had done in other cases. Teacher will question on events after S. Stephen's martyrdom, after S. Peter's imprisonment.

APPLICATION

This visit to Antioch had a momentous result for the Church. It must have prepared S. Paul's mind still more for his work among the Gentiles. A little later he knows that "the Gospel of the Uncircumcision" (Gal. ii. 7, 8) is given to him. His lack of success with the Jews is the cause of his determination to "turn to the Gentiles." How wonderfully God the Holy Ghost was working! Suppose the Jews had welcomed S. Paul; what then? We should perhaps have had to wait a long time for missions to the Gentiles. But the world was ready for the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit found a way of sending it through an apparent failure. Learn Eph. iii. 20, 21. He turns failure into success so long as we are anxious to do His bidding. So with each one. If we have done all we can for God, and yet our work has seemed to fail, we may be sure that His purpose is to bring a greater good than that which we have sought. Tennyson in "In Memoriam" (LIV) says:—

> "Oh yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill,
> To pangs of nature, sins of will,
> Defects of doubt, and taints of blood."

Expression Work: 1. Show how the Holy Spirit had prepared the Church for the call of the Gentiles.

2. Write down any former examples of Gentile conversions in Acts.

Hymn 432, A. and M., "Captains of the saintly band."

Lesson XXIII. ICONIUM AND LYSTRA

Aim. *To teach that S. Paul's work is more and more "to the Gentiles."*

PREPARATION

Retrace on map journey up to this point, and ask class to give events connected with Paphos (Sergius Paulus; use of name Paul by Apostle), Perga (John Mark withdraws), Antioch in Pisidia ("We turn to the Gentiles"). Recall persecution at Antioch and journey to Iconium.

PRESENTATION

I. *Signs and Wonders at Iconium* (xiv. 1–7).—The two friends preach to Jews first (*cf.* xiii. 14) in the synagogue. Picture the scene, Jews and Greek proselytes together; many believed; successful as at Antioch. Same thing happened, persecution (*cf.* xiii. 50). But Apostles stayed on teaching there, gaining ground, adding Gentiles too through signs and wonders (xiv. 3). Compare with Elymas at Paphos.

II. *A divided City.*—Unbelieving Jews persuaded some Gentiles to join them—city divided into two factions (4). Shows what interest people had in the new doctrine. Persecutors got magistrates on their side, assaulted Apostles, attempted stoning, so driving them to Lystra in Lycaonia (Wolf-land). What does this name show? Wild land, almost entirely heathen, in heart of Asia Minor (map), few Jews, apparently no synagogue (yet home of S. Timothy, mother a Jewess, xvi. 1). Holy Spirit turns failure into success; Church got a new bishop from this unpromising place (Lesson XXVIII).

III. *A Miracle in Lystra* (xiv. 8–18).—Let class read silently. Teacher will explain as follows:—

Verse 11. "The speech of Lycaonia." Apostles spoke Greek, did not understand this speech. People knew Greek. "The gods," &c. People believed Jupiter had once visited them. Statue to him in city.

Verse 12. "Jupiter" = the chief of the gods. "Mercury" = the spokesman of the gods. Which Apostle preached?

Verse 13. "Priest," *i.e.* of Jupiter's temple. The garlanded oxen were to be offered up as sacrifices. "The gates," either of the temple or of the city.

Verses 14–17. A sermon against idolatry. Speaks of God. Does not

speak of our Lord. First the Apostle teaches men that God is their Father.

The teacher can pictorially describe this wonderful scene—two Apostles speaking Greek; crowd of heathens, full of false beliefs; priest of Jupiter and garlanded oxen ready for sacrifice; then Apostles dismayed, rushing among people when they understood the purpose, persuading them to cease and sending them home. Contrast this with Herod (Lesson XX), and compare with events at Malta (Lesson XLVI).

IV. *S. Paul stoned at Lystra* (xiv. 19, 20).—Teaching goes on; much to do; some heathen converted; some Jews also (picture Timothy listening). Persecution again by Jews who intended this time to kill S. Paul. (*Cf.* 2 Cor. xi. 25.) What would Apostle think of? (Lessons XV, XVI.) Not to die yet, though dragged out of city stunned. Strength returned, went back to Lystra, then next day on to Derbe (thirty miles away, map). Wonderful recovery! Think of Barnabas during stoning, a quiet, gentle nature, very distressed, had not brought fury upon himself like S. Paul. What might he do during stoning? (Pray.) Which part of Lord's Prayer? (Deliver us from evil.) Think of his gladness at S. Paul's recovery, not to be left alone amid such idolatrous and cruel people.

APPLICATION

When Apostles left Iconium and went into "Wolf-land" it must have seemed almost impossible to win converts there. Whose suggestion to go there? Probably S. Paul's. Remember "we turn to the Gentiles." Yet again the Holy Ghost is guiding the work, giving signs and wonders, bringing success always out of the teaching. Think of idolatry, and then of Timothy. How he must have cheered S. Paul's heart—a holy man in the midst of such wickedness. If we can only persuade one person to serve God and come to church, to Sunday school, to class, we are doing the work which the Holy Ghost gives us to do, a greater work than we know perhaps. Even S. Paul probably never expected such a result as Timothy, a future bishop, for his work at Lystra. But he laboured remembering that "God gives the increase."

Expression Work: 1. Draw a map of the first missionary journey so far.

2. Show how S. Paul was gradually led to fulfil Acts ix. 15.

Hymn 438, A. and M., "How bright these glorious spirits shine!"

Lesson XXIV. "ELDERS" IN EVERY CHURCH

Aim. *To show that the Church to-day has the three orders of ministers appointed by the Apostles.*

PREPARATION

Recall Lesson X, "the ordering of deacons." Ask why they were ordained? (To assist Apostles.) Now we read of the appointment of a second order of clergy. What is that? (Elders, then also called bishops, but corresponding to our second order, priests.) How would you distinguish priest from deacon in church? (Manner of wearing stole, over both shoulders, Lesson X.) What can a priest do that deacon cannot? (Celebrate Holy Communion, give Absolution. Open Prayer Book at both Holy Communion Office and Absolution at Morning Prayer; note word "priest.") How are priests ordained? (Open at Service of Ordination, and read the Bishop's words, with the rubric.) Church is "Apostolic" in this. She uses our Lord's own words (John xx. 22, 23) and follows example of Apostles. Let us read of the events that led up to the first ordination of elders that we read of. Acts xiv. 19–28.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Gospel preached in Derbe.*—Recall the riot at Lystra, caused by the Jewish unbelievers who persuaded the Gentiles. Latter perhaps disappointed at finding S. Paul and Barnabas to be men, not gods. In any case very fickle. Compare multitude on Palm Sunday with that on Good Friday. Then speak of S. Paul stoned, dragged out for dead, suddenly recovering, returning to city and setting out for Derbe (map), thirty miles off, next day. What strength and energy God gave S. Paul for his work! Notice the success there, among Gentiles again largely no doubt (21).

II. *The Return of the Apostles.*—Notice the towns mentioned (map). From each they had been expelled. Yet there were enough Christians in each to visit again, teach, strengthen, encourage them to be faithful amid sufferings. Let class imagine what sufferings these new Christians must endure in each town (*a*) from Jews, (*b*) from heathen Gentiles.

III. *The Appointment of Elders.*—Recall Lesson XXI, the remark on "elders" at Jerusalem (xi. 30). Remember that SS. Paul and Barnabas had taken the alms of Antioch to Jerusalem—the same two Apostles of whom we now speak. They gave the alms to "elders," not "deacons," who had been charged with "the daily ministration." So evidently the "elders" were already an order of clergy at Jerusalem, distinct from Apostles, also called "bishops" or "overseers" (xx. 28), with higher power than that of "deacons." Now think of the difficulties of the Churches in Lystra, Iconium, Antioch. The

two Apostles would soon be going away; the Christians would be left to themselves to endure "tribulation"; so they must have opportunities of worship together, an organised Church, with power of helping each other. So the Jerusalem method is adopted here and "elders" ordained. How? (Class will describe verse 23, and teacher will compare briefly with ordination of priests to-day by Bishops.) We find them later in other places (xx. 17, 28). How thorough was the work! All the organisation of a parish in each Church.

IV. *The Homeward Journey: Antioch again.*—Trace the course on the map, noting that Pisidia seems to have been thoroughly visited everywhere. The first missionary journey ends at Antioch. Picture the home-coming, the gladness of the Apostles and the Church. The Holy Ghost was right (xiii. 2); God always knows. He "had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" through these missionaries. Think of the renewed zeal at Antioch, their wonder at the news—a missionary Church is always alive with zeal. Now the Apostles could help at Antioch (recall the description in Lesson XXI) and gain many Gentile converts there.

APPLICATION

How many kinds of clergy have we read of in Acts? (Three: Apostles, witnesses of the Resurrection (i. 22), Elders = overseers, Deacons.) What orders of clergy have we now? (Bishops, Priests, Deacons.) Teacher will make the comparison and explain thus: (1) Bishop (Greek *episkopos* = overseer; Old English, Biscop; Modern English, Bishop). (2) Priest (Greek, *presbyteres* = elder, an older man = presbyter = priest). (3) Deacon (Greek *diakonos* = minister, servant). All ordained by prayer and laying on of hands in Acts, as now. (See Lesson XXVIII.)

Think of careful organisation of missionary parishes. The Holy Spirit had begun the work. He guided it all through. Recall title of Book. He still dwells with the Church, still calls us all to take part in missions, still guides missionary methods, and keeps those who are converted true to the faith amid their sufferings. Think how Church at Antioch would pray for absent members. Think, too, how we ought to follow that example. Teacher will ask class to join any suitable missionary organisations in parish, and at close of lesson offer any missionary prayers or intercessions used therein.

Expression Work: 1. Show from "Acts" that in the Apostolic Church the way was being prepared for the three orders of clergy as we have them to-day.

2. Prove that the "Apostolic" Church always helped in missionary work.

Hymn 445, A. and M., "Palms of glory, raiment bright."

Lesson XXV. GENTILE LIBERTY

Aim. *To show that all men may become members of the Christian Church.*

PREPARATION

Remember speaking of Antioch and work there. Who were the Apostles? What people were coming into the Church? (Gentiles.) Now see results of this (Acts xv. 1–35).

PRESENTATION

I. *The Jealous Christian Jews* (xv. 1–5).—Christian Jews at Antioch evidently small body, sent for Judæan Jews to come to help them to enforce their own notions of the place of the Gentiles in the Church. What did they want? Why? Evident that not all accepted S. Peter's teaching (Lesson XIX). Position was this:

1. Should Christianity be made a mere Jewish sect? or,
2. Should it go forth to the world free to do its own work?

Let us see how the Holy Spirit answers this question (*cf.* xi. 15–18). Picture Church at Antioch selecting its leaders, their journey, their news to the Palestine Churches, their arrival at Jerusalem. Note organisation there (Apostles, Elders, Church generally—question class on this). Then comes first explanation and opposition of Pharisaic believers.

II. *The Witness of S. Peter* (xv. 6–12).—Let class speak of anything in past life which would enable him to witness (Lesson XVIII). Which side would he take? Why? Teacher will picture the council meeting; S. James, "the Lord's brother," was president; Apostles and Elders make final settlement. Revise the "agenda" of the meeting (1, 2, above). Then note the "much disputing" (7), then S. Peter's witness summarised thus: "Why dispute? Moses' law does not save us; only the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ can do that. Then why impose the Law of Moses any longer?" Next the ambassadors speak, explaining their case (12). Think what S. Paul would say. Let class suggest how he would tell of response from Gentiles on missionary journey, then progress of work at Antioch.

III. *The Sentence of S. James* (xv. 13–21).—At last the presiding Apostle speaks. Who is he? Teacher will give brief account of him (see Lesson XX)—not one of the Twelve, but a half-brother or cousin of our Lord, to whom He specially appeared after Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7); a very holy man, "James the Just." Legend says he spent his whole life in prayer. Think what effect such a

man's words would have; everyone would listen to him—think particularly of S. Paul's anxiety. His speech is short: (1) Amos the prophet (ix. 11) said that the Gentiles should seek the Lord, *i.e.* through Baptism; (2) we must leave the Gentiles free from Jewish restrictions, asking them not to do two things that offend Jews, *i.e.* not to eat things strangled or animals from which the blood had not been taken.

IV. *The Decree of the Mother Church* (23–29).—Let the class read the letter. Analyse it thus: (1) The Address (23); (2) the matter discussed (24); (3) the bearers of the answer (25–27); (4) the decree and greeting (28, 29). *Cf.* verses 22 and 27. Why should they send Judas (Barsabas) and Silas? (To represent the Mother Church.) Note "to whom we gave no such commandment"; the Jerusalem Church cuts off the false teachers in the strongest terms. There could be no further mistake about "Gentile Liberty."

V. *The Gentiles rejoiced.*—Picture the glad journey to Antioch with the decree, the gathering of the Christians, the letter read, and then the joy and the subsequent increase of the Church, free now to go on with Gentile work. Read R.V. account in verses 30–35.

APPLICATION

At last the Church quite clearly declared that Gentiles were to be admitted to the Church by baptism only. Christians not a Jewish sect. The Church "makes disciples of all nations, baptizing them," free to go into all the world. The Holy Ghost has brought this to pass. Think how gradually: first an African; then a Roman family; now a Gentile Church in one city. Thus the Church grows larger and larger. Recall title of "Acts"—Gospel of the Holy Ghost. S. Paul is ready for the Gentiles; they are waiting for him. All a wonderful preparation for spread of Church. Then think of unity of Church—all agreed, whole Church helps the forward work—unity declared. "We are not divided," &c. (Hymn 391, A. and M.). An old writer quotes a heathen saying: "How these Christians love one another." We can see love at work in the Acts. We must practise it towards our fellow-Christians, be kind, charitable in thought, strong to speak for and support right, and not afraid to follow what we believe to be true.

Expression Work: 1. Copy the first decree of the Church.

2. What difference would this decree make to the future of the Church?

Hymn 220, A. and M., "Jesus shall reign."

Lesson XXVI. JOHN, WHOSE SURNAME WAS MARK

Aim. *To give an insight into the training of the Evangelist S. Mark.*

PREPARATION

Ask class to think of the Upper Room. Where was it? In whose house? (xii. 12). Let class tell of any important events connected with it. Refer to Last Supper there. Picture the interest of the occupants of the house as they saw our Lord and disciples entering. A young Jew, the son of the house, saw Him there. His mother already a Christian. Then the young man followed to Gethsemane. Read the story in S. Mark xiv. 51, 52. Next Sunday, Easter Day, he would hear of wonderful events. What? (The Risen Lord's appearance in his home.) At other times He came also, *e.g.* Ascension Day. What was our Lord's order to the disciples? (i. 4). Upper Room became first Christian Church; Apostle elected there. Who? Then Whitsunday (ii. 1).

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Peter the first Teacher of S. Mark.*—What Apostle took the lead in these events? Often in Upper Room. Picture the older man teaching the younger all about our Lord. Where shall we find what S. Peter taught him? (S. Mark's Gospel.)

II. *Mark the "minister" of Barnabas and Saul.*—Recall Lesson XXI, the taking of John Mark to Antioch. Barnabas was his cousin (Col. iv. 10), wanted him to help forward the growing Church. Then time came for "first missionary journey." The "minister" is John Mark (xiii. 5). He was perhaps a kind of business agent, found lodging and food for Apostles in the towns they visited, probably also baptized Christians, and helped in other ways to set Apostles free for "prayer and the ministry of the Word" (vi. 4).

III. *Mark returns to Jerusalem* (xiii. 13).—Why he did so we can only speculate. The following are some reasons suggested:—(1) He lost courage when he knew S. Paul's plan of going into the wild country of Asia Minor. He had been brought up in a refined home in Jerusalem, and did not want to venture among heathens. (2) He was not prepared to preach the Gospel to Gentiles. Remember that he was S. Peter's pupil, and with what slow steps the latter had been trained. Even yet Apostle had difficulties about equality of Jews and Gentiles (Gal. ii. 11, 12). (3) He was not sure what the Jerusalem Church would

think of the mission. They had approved of Antioch, sending Barnabas there; Cyprus was the home of Barnabas, and so might well be visited; but nothing had been said of Asia Minor.

IV. *Mark a Missionary with Barnabas* (xv. 36–41).—After a time of quiet work in Antioch, "the second missionary journey" is thought over. The first had been a great success. The second was intended to cover the ground again (v. 36). Barnabas is willing, but wants Mark. Why? (Compare reasons for S. Mark's return given above: (1) Mark's courage has returned; he must be restored to his old position. (2) Mark had learnt the will of the Jerusalem Church now. Also (3) perhaps Barnabas was not in full agreement with S. Paul's Gentile policy (Gal. ii. 13), and wanted Mark's support if any question arose.) S. Paul would not agree (v. 38), chose Silas, a Roman, useful for the Roman world; S. Barnabas went to Cyprus, taking S. Mark. Apostles remained friends (1 Cor. ix. 6) after separating. Their ideas were different. Mark again at work, faithful this time, in good hands, with Barnabas.

V. *S. Mark wins S. Paul's respect.*—Thrice in later life S. Paul speaks of him: (1) Col. iv. 10: Mark is with him and is being sent to Colossæ to the Christians there. (2) Philemon 24: Mark is one of the fellow-labourers of S. Paul at Rome. (3) S. Paul, in second imprisonment, wants him by his side (2 Tim. iv. 11). The last reference is by his early teacher, S. Peter (1 Pet. v. 13). Notice the affection expressed. Mark is helping him, writing his teaching in a book—the earliest Gospel, S. Mark's (really S. Peter's by S. Mark). Later tradition says he was Bishop of Alexandria. His body is said to be buried where S. Mark's, Venice, stands. Show picture and describe cathedral.

APPLICATION

Two points to be noticed especially: (1) The Holy Ghost permits the "contention" about S. Mark to part SS. Paul and Barnabas, in order to spread the Kingdom more rapidly than if they had all worked together. (2) It was the kindness and care of S. Barnabas that kept S. Mark to the work of Christ and made him useful for the work of the Church. Find a friend who needs your help, and hold fast to him till you have made him what God wants him to be.

Expression Work: 1. Find a description of S. Mark's, Venice, and learn how it came to be built.

2. Read Hymn 410, A. and M., and explain it by referring to Ezek. i. 5 and Rev. iv. 7.

Hymn 410, A. and M., "From out the cloud of amber light."

Lesson XXVII. BARNABAS, THE SON OF EXHORTATION

Aim. *To gather from Acts and Epistles an insight into the character of S. Barnabas.*

PREPARATION

Recall last lesson. Who was S. Mark's cousin? Let class tell of anything they remember about him by way of revision of former lessons. Teacher will then group following points in order:—

PRESENTATION

I. *Barnabas, a Levite of Cyprus* (iv. 36, 37).—Comes early into Acts, perhaps because he is an important man of wealth, different from many in Church. What were most like? This man has goods. How does he use them? So, now he is on visit to his aunt's house—perhaps converted there. [Picture imaginatively his earlier life in Cyprus, a young Jewish boy (*cf.* choir-boy), then a young man growing up to goodness amid heathenism, until visit to Jerusalem. What would he want to see there? Heard how the Messiah of his race had come. Who? How He had suffered and risen. "Upper Room" in his aunt's house. Could talk with witnesses of the Resurrection. Perhaps present there at Pentecost. That would convince him of truth of our Lord's Resurrection. So must join Church. How?]

II. *S. Barnabas a practical Christian.*—His religion was his life. He intended to keep his Baptismal Promises as well as could be. How did he do it? Class will tell story of his selling his field to help poor of Jerusalem. A great Gift had been given him. Felt he must do something to show gratitude—practical Christianity. Lesson to us: do something for Mother Church! Class will suggest what: prayer, alms, missionary work, &c.

III. *S. Barnabas, a kind Friend* (ix. 26–28).—Picture Barnabas going about Jerusalem, helping the poor, using his talents (recall meaning of his name). Day comes when he has very important work to do for the greatest missionary. Who? What is the work? Church trusted Barnabas. Knew he would be true. Acknowledged S. Paul's special ministry through his word. S. Paul would not forget this action of friendship.

IV. *S. Barnabas a trusted Messenger* (xi. 19–30).—Recall Lesson XXI, beginnings and rapid progress of Church in Antioch after S. Stephen's martyrdom. What did Church of Jerusalem do? *Cf.* how they had trusted him about S. Paul. Notice "he exhorted them all." (*Cf.* meaning of his name, R.V.) Church grows quickly there;

Barnabas wants a companion; whom will he find? Why? Knows and trusts S. Paul; claims his work as a friend. Then let class tell story of verses 27–30, the friends together on a message of love.

V. *S. Barnabas a true Missionary* (xiii. 2–4).—Recall the story of the beginning of the first missionary journey, the Holy Ghost's command, the "dismissal" service. Note Barnabas mentioned first (verse 2). He therefore begins the plan of the journey. Where do they begin? Why at Cyprus? Barnabas knew it, his home; anxious to give his "good news" there to his friends; perhaps also wanted to show the island and people to John Mark. Why? (Lesson XXVI). Recall circumstances at Paphos (verses 7–12), how S. Paul takes the lead from this time. Probably Barnabas found that he was more fitted for strengthening and building up those whom S. Paul converted. Different men have different talents; all are of some use for Christ's work. We never read that Barnabas grumbled or complained of his task. He had found his work, and did it with zeal. Ask class to tell of any other incidents on journey, *e.g.* of attempted worship of Barnabas as Jupiter at Lystra.

VI. *S. Barnabas the helper of S. Mark.*—Revise last lesson by questioning upon the contention, why it was brought about, what it led to (separation of work), and the influence of Barnabas upon S. Mark. Finally refer to 1 Cor. ix. 6. Barnabas is said to have been martyred in Cyprus.

APPLICATION

The life of S. Barnabas has one very great lesson—steadfastness. He shows the same quality of heart all through. From the beginning he realised that love of Christ meant that he must love his brethren. Gather up his actions into four: (1) Loved the poor and helped them for Christ's sake; (2) loved the dreaded Saul, now a Christian, but in difficulties, for Christ's sake; (3) loved his work in Antioch and in foreign lands for Christ's sake; (4) loved the young, but timid, Mark for Christ's sake. Think of honour he had. What? (Supported the greatest missionary and the first Evangelist of the Church through love.) Must have had a noble character to do this. Who was working in him? (Holy Spirit.) Used His gifts as well as possible for his Master. Read Collect for S. Barnabas' Day, and then the Gospel. Question on reason for selecting this passage for Gospel, and apply to the four "actions."

Expression Work: 1. Give in your own words the story of S. Barnabas.

2. Explain his name (A.V. and R.V.), and show how he came by it, and how it suited him.

Hymn 412, A. and M., "Brightly did the light Divine."

Lesson XXVIII. THE CALL OF TIMOTHY

Aims. 1. *To show by a sketch of the call and life of Timothy how Christ's ministers have from the first been carefully chosen and prepared for the work of the Church.* 2. *To teach the origin of the three orders of the ministry.* (*Acts xvi.* 1–5.)

PREPARATION

The Comrades of S. Paul.—Ask class to name some of S. Paul's best-known comrades. Luke, Mark, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, will probably be given. Acts xv. 39 shows that Barnabas and Mark have now left Apostle and gone to Cyprus; Silas is with him, but he needs another helper: the call of Timothy. Why should he need helpers? What would they do? Preparation for the fixed ministry. Note the Apostle S. Paul, Silas an Elder, Timothy possibly a Deacon.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Call of S. Timothy.*—Where was S. Paul now? (xv. 41). Trace his course on the map, and let class read silently xvi. 1–3. When had S. Paul visited Lystra before? (xiv. 6, 7). What had happened? (Miracle, worship of Apostles, stoning of S. Paul, continued work, appointment of elders.) xvi. 2 shows that Timothy was already a Christian worker, and therefore baptized. Why circumcised? Because S. Paul intended to take him with him on his journeys, and would begin his work with Jews.

II. *The Evidence of the Epistles.*—Where do we learn more about Timothy? In Epistles, and especially the two addressed to him. Carefully putting some of the references together from these two Epistles the class should be encouraged to frame a life of Timothy.

III. *S. Timothy's Boyhood and later Life.*—Timothy's parentage (2 Tim. i. 5; *cf.* Acts xvi. 1). Home, boyhood, and preparation (2 Tim. iii. 14, 15). Selection and ordination (2 Tim. i. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14). The comrade of S. Paul (Acts xvi. 3). His name linked with S. Paul's in the salutations of six Epistles, viz. 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon; *cf.* 2 Tim. iii. 10, 11. Later as Bishop at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3; v. 22). S. Paul's deep affection for him (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 1–5).

IV. *His Character.*—Strong and weak points; loyal and devoted, perhaps of poor health and somewhat timid (2 Tim. i. 7, 8; 1 Tim. iv. 12–16; v. 23).

APPLICATION

The Origin of the Church's Ministry.—Spoken of Timothy as Bishop: give names of other orders of clergy to-day. What is a Bishop? Means an "overseer," and denotes the first of the three orders of the clergy, with the power of ordaining. Who ordained in S. Paul's time? The Apostles: *e.g.* Acts vi. 5, 6; xiv. 23; *cf.* xiii. 2, 3. (Lessons XXI and XXIV.) Who gave them this power? *cf.* Acts i. 21. Election of Matthias. The three orders not yet definitely settled. The early Church rich in spiritual gifts. (See 1 Cor. xii. 8–12.) Christ's early return expected, need of permanent ministry not so felt. We can, however, trace its first beginnings. Thus we note Apostles, Elders (Presbyter = Prêtre = Priests, the older man), also called Episcopi or Bishops = overseers (see Acts xx. 17, 28; Tit. i. 5–7; 1 Tim. iii. 1 and v. 1), and Deacons, or younger men (Lessons X and XXIV). As Church extended and also Apostles began to die, we see some of these Elders or Bishops given charge or oversight in certain districts with power to ordain (*e.g.* Timothy at Ephesus, Titus in Crete), and by end of first century we see the three orders as we have them to-day, and the term Bishops confined to first order of clergy now that the Apostles are no more, Elders or Priests to the second, and Deacons to the third. Who taught the Apostles to ordain? And when? (Acts i. 2, 3.) Instructions for carrying on kingdom. Thus the Church's ministry to-day dates from Jesus Christ.

The Ordination Services.—Where do we find directions to-day for this? What is necessary in ordination? The laying on of hands by proper authority. (See Acts vi. 5, 6; xiv. 23; *cf.* xiii. 3. See Form and Manner of making Deacons, &c.) The teacher will picture service, and point out how we to-day are doing what we believe Christ Himself ordered. As Timothy was well reported of, carefully instructed, tested and ordained, so must clergy be to-day. (Compare Timothy's companionship with S. Paul and others with College course to-day.)

The Call of the Holy Spirit.—Repeat Ember Collect, call special attention to question of Bishop *re* guidance and call of Holy Spirit, and emphasize importance of prayers for the clergy that they may be worthy of their high calling.

Expression Work: 1. Encourage class to read parts of Ordination Service, and see that the clergy to-day are expected to have the experience and do the work which Timothy did.

2. Distinguish the special duties of the Bishop, Priest, and Deacon.

Hymn 353, A. and M., "O Thou Who makest souls to shine."

Lesson XXIX. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE GOSPEL IN EUROPE

Aims. 1. *To teach strikingly the great meeting of S. Paul with S. Luke, and what we owe to it.* 2. *To show the nature of S. Paul's missionary work and the active power of the Holy Ghost by which he was directed and able to do it.* (*Acts xvi.* 6–13.)

PREPARATION

Friendships.—Chums at school, &c.: well-known friends—*e.g.* David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, Nisus and Euryalus, Luther and Melancthon, Tennyson and Arthur Hallam, &c. Our work to-day to learn about two great friends, S. Paul and S. Luke, how they met and how their friendship began.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Paul at Troas.*—Class will read xvi. 4–10, following the route on the map, noting the cities visited, the decrees of the Council (Acts xv.), the growing strength of the Church. S. Paul anxious to strike while iron is hot. Holy Spirit forbids. Why? Other work to do. (Map again: the Gospel must not be shut up in Asia Minor but cross the sea.) S. Paul obeys, comes to Troas, waits call.

II. *The Meeting with S. Luke.*—Read verses 9 and 10 very carefully, call attention to change from "Paul," "him," and "he," to "we" and "us." Get class to see that the writer of the Acts is now a fellow-traveller with S. Paul. (If necessary, sketch imaginary letter of teacher with class, showing same changes from "they" to "we," &c.) Who wrote Acts? S. Luke now S. Paul's comrade. Show value of this "we" where it occurs in Acts. We know when S. Luke is with S. Paul, and can trace this wonderful companionship. Notice S. Luke never mentions his own name.

III. *The Vision and Call to Macedonia: The Sealing of a great Friendship.*—What led to meeting? Suggest that S. Paul was in suffering, that the thorn in flesh (2 Cor. xii. 7) was some trouble with eyes (Lesson XV. *Cf.* Gal. iv. 13–15; Acts xxiii. 5 he did not recognise the High Priest), and that, needing medical help, he called in S. Luke, beloved physician (Col. iv. 14). Very probable. Anyhow, they met at Troas. Picture scene: Apostle eagerly waiting call, S. Luke has perhaps

already heard of him, is attracted by his faith and zeal, tells him of openings for Gospel in West, across the sea; Europe waiting for the good news of Jesus the Christ; they go to rest, vision of Man of Macedonia, the face probably that of Luke himself, with whom he had been talking earnestly. (Picture graphically.) The stirring appeal to "come over and help us." In the morning S. Paul tells his vision, and Luke joins him. Emphasize again value of "we" as evidence of S. Luke's constant companionship. Refer to Col. iv. 14, showing that S. Luke was with S. Paul during his first imprisonment, and 2 Tim. iv. 11, showing that only Luke was with him in the second imprisonment; faithful to the end.

III. *Work in Macedonia: Philippi.*—At once work begins: journey (map) by Samothrace, Neapolis, to Philippi. Why so called? Note great battle in 42 B.C., refer to Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. City for its services a Roman "colony," with special privileges, proud of citizenship (xvi. 21), and careful to treat Romans with respect (xvi. 38).

IV. *S. Paul's method.*—How does S. Paul begin his work? Seeks Jew first: on Sabbath, at "praying-place" or synagogue (xvi. 13; *cf.* xvii. 1, 2, 10). Reasoning from Scriptures (Old Testament), teaching that Christ, the promised Messiah, must suffer, and that the Jesus crucified and risen Whom he preached was the promised Christ (xvii. 2, 3). *Cf.* our Lord's own teaching (S. Luke xxiv. 25–27 and xxiv. 44–46), passages from "Moses" (Gen. iii. 15; Num. xxi. 9; *cf.* S. John iii. 14; Exod. xii. 46), and refer to Psalm xxii. and Isaiah liii.

APPLICATION

By recapitulation bring out:

1. *The active Guidance of the Holy Spirit.*—What led S. Paul to Macedonia? Had he intended to go there? Why not? What do *we* owe to this call of the Spirit? (Meeting with S. Luke, Gospel in Europe, Acts and S. Luke's Gospel.) Is Holy Spirit still with us? How do we know this? How hear Him? Emphasize title given to Acts, "Gospel of the Holy Spirit." (See Lesson II.)

Expression Work: Give class the two references in S. Luke and the references to the Old Testament, and let them write out the passages which our Lord probably used to show that the expected Christ must be "a Suffering Messiah."

Hymn 364, A. and M., "God of grace, O let Thy light."

Lesson XXX. MISSION WORK IN MACEDONIA: CONVERSION OF LYDIA

Aims. *To teach the beginnings of the Church in Macedonia: to show what the message of the Gospel was, and how Christians were made.* (*Acts xvi.* 14, 15.)

PREPARATION

Map: special interest in Macedonia to-day: long subject to Turkey, now liberated. Class will see how it first became Christian.

PRESENTATION

I. *Preaching by waterside at Philippi.*—Class by recapitulation will tell nature of gathering—Jews and proselytes—who knew Old Testament Scriptures, and expected the Messiah—company includes many women.

II. *Conversion of Lydia.*—Read silently xvi. 14, 15, class will then tell story of Lydia: who? Thyatira? (Map.) Lydia already worshipped God: a proselyte: hears S. Paul, heart opened by Holy Spirit: believes, and is baptized with her whole house: entertains Apostle and his companions.

III. *The Nature of S. Paul's message.*—What did she hear which made her turn Christian? That the expected Messiah was come already, and that Jesus Christ was He. Class will read carefully xvii. 1–3, state following points:—

1. S. Paul appeals to the Old Testament Scriptures, which they knew.
2. He shows from them that the expected Messiah must suffer and rise again from the dead.
3. He declares that the Jesus whom he preaches to them (as crucified and risen again) is this expected Messiah.

IV. *It is the Teaching of Jesus Christ.*—Is this S. Paul's own idea, or had he learnt it from others? What others? The Apostles and Jesus Christ Himself. Can you give any instances? Apostles: S. Peter's sermon at Pentecost, chap. ii.; SS. Peter and John at Temple, chap. iii. Our Lord: S. Luke xxiv. 25–27 to two disciples on way to Emmaus; S. Luke xxiv. 44–46 to eleven Apostles in the Upper Room.

What passages from the Old Testament would our Lord (as afterwards S. Paul) have probably used? See Lesson XXIX, Section IV. Note specially our Lord's own reference to the Brazen Serpent (S. John iii. 14); S. John's identification of Jesus as the Paschal Lamb (S. John xix. 36).

V. *The Christian belief.*—What, then, were the first Christians called upon to believe with regard to Jesus Christ? That He suffered—

was crucified and died—and rose again from the dead. What do we say in our Baptismal Creed? Our belief the same to-day as then.

APPLICATION

How Christians were, and are, made.—To whom did Apostles speak first? Grown ups or children? Why? Must know what to believe. What followed on their confession of belief? Why were they baptized? (S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). Were only the older people baptized? No. See Lydia and household, and xvi. 33, the Philippian jailer and family, and Eph. vi. 1, instructions to children "in the Lord," *i.e.* baptized into His name. See also Acts ii. 39.

The Soldier's oath.—Emphasize the duty and privilege of parents in a Christian country (i) in bringing their children to be baptized, and (ii) in teaching them the great truths of Christ the Saviour, into Whose family—the Church—they have been admitted, Whose sign they bear on their foreheads, and Whose pledged soldiers and servants they are. Let class repeat carefully the words of the baptismal formula and reception: the Christian soldier's oath of loyalty to his King.

Note.—For older scholars the meaning and purpose of the Creed as illustrated by the well-known example of ICHTHYS, the Fish, will be found interesting and useful.

The Latin word for creed is *symbolum*, really a Greek word in Latin form, from a verb meaning to throw or put together, and so "a token" or "watchword" by which one Christian could recognise another. One early token well known, ICHTHYS, the Greek for a fish, really contains the great truths of the Creed:—I first letter of IESUS, CH of CHRISTOS, TH for THEOU, meaning of God, Y for UIOS (Gk. *υἱός*) = the Son, S for SŌTĒR, the Saviour. So this word for fish reminded a Christian of his belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour.

In later days a simple creed (*cf.* Acts viii. 36–7) was explained and taught to candidates a few days before baptism; this was called the Delivery or handing over of the Creed; at baptism this creed was publicly repeated or handed back by the candidate: sometimes little bone emblems of fishes were given; compare crosses given at confirmation or badges on joining a Guild. In Farrar's *Darkness and Dawn* a slave by talking to a fellow-slave about fishing shows that he is a Christian. The emblem of the fish is to be found in the decoration of many churches to-day, *e.g.* sanctuary pavements, walls, &c.

Expression Work: Find from S. Luke's Gospel the beginning of women's work for Christ (S. Luke viii. 2, 3; x. 38–42; xxiii. 55, 56; xxiv. 1–10).

Hymn 280, A. and M., "Thine for ever! God of love."

Lesson XXXI. FURTHER WORK IN MACEDONIA: THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER

Aims. *To teach the story of further work in Philippi: to show the power of faith in the Lord Jesus: to illustrate some features of S. Paul's personal character and behaviour.* (*Acts xvi.* 16–40.)

PREPARATION

Further work in Philippi.—By brief reference to the previous lessons see that the class have a clear idea of S. Paul's position and work in Philippi. Where was he staying? How did he use his time and opportunities? How do we know that his work was successful? (Here give briefly the evidence of the Epistle to the Philippians, written about ten years later, and showing a bright and happy Church, eager to work and help, with an organised body of rulers, devoted to the Apostle. *Cf.* especially Phil. i. 1; i. 3–6; iv. 1; iv. 15–18.)

PRESENTATION

I. *The Casting out of the Python.*—So far all peaceful, now difficulty and danger. Class will read aloud or silently, or teacher will tell in his own words the story of the maid with the spirit of divination. (Note R.V., and explain "Python" briefly: Pytho, near Delphi, seat of the great oracle of Apollo; Python, the serpent killed by him there; hence Apollo and the priestess at Delphi called "the Pythian." The term "Pythons" was later applied to persons with strange powers, *e.g.* ventriloquism, with which second sight or prophecy was often supposed to be combined.) Bring out the points: regular visits to the place of prayer, the witness of the girl to the Apostle and his party, S. Paul troubled, casts out the spirit. Why troubled? Compare casting out of devils in Gospel. He fears same charge as made against Jesus Christ (S. Luke xi. 15), and will not accept the witness of evil spirits. What happens?

II. *S. Paul and his Comrades imprisoned.*—With casting out of the spirit girl's powers are gone. Her masters, sore at loss of gain, drag Paul and Silas before magistrates, charge them (1) as Jews and therefore unpopular, (2) with troubling the city, and (3) introducing customs which as Romans the people of Philippi ought not to observe. They are condemned unheard, beaten on the spot, and thrown into prison.

III. *The Earthquake.*—Let class, after reading silently xvi. 25, 26, picture scene: midnight: Apostles praying and singing: prisoners listening: earthquake: doors open: chains and fastenings come from the walls (*cf.* story of earthquake at Messina or San Francisco): jailer roused from sleep, in despair, about to kill himself. Why? What stops him?

IV. *Conversion of Jailer.*—S. Paul's cry: "We are all here," the man's astonishment, "the stories he has heard about these men are true," "this is a sign from Heaven," "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus." His confession accepted, he tends his beaten prisoners, he becomes a Christian, how? with all his house. Jailer and prisoners, now one in Jesus Christ, rejoice together in the common meal. (Rackham sees in the "meat" or "table" (verse 34) an agape and eucharist. See Lesson XXXVIII.)

V. *The Reception of the News.*—The news spread quickly to the magistrates. What did they do? How did S. Paul receive their message? Why did he refuse to go? Wrongly condemned, and justice must be done. Philippians proud of being Romans, he was a Roman too. Notice result.

VI. *The Release.*—The magistrates come themselves, beg Apostle to leave city. The missionaries visit house of Lydia, comfort or strengthen the believers by this wonderful evidence of God's power and protection, and leave the city.

APPLICATION

By recapitulation:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit in heart of jailer as in heart of Lydia. These two families seedplots for God.

2. God in the earthquake: He helps us when we are powerless to help ourselves (Acts v. 19; xii. 5–12).

3. S. Paul's courage, dignity, and firmness: a strong man and leader.

Expression Work: Let class look up Epistle to Philippians: i. 3, i. 27, i. 30, iii. 20, iv. 1, iv. 14, iv. 18, and note (1) allusions to story of sufferings, (2) reference to citizenship, (3) their affection for S. Paul, and his pride in them.

Hymn 279, A. and M., "O help us, Lord, each hour of need."

Lesson XXXII. THESSALONICA AND BERŒA

Aims. 1. *To teach story of the founding of the Church in Thessalonica and Berœa.* 2. *To encourage mission work.* 3. *To show that S. Paul and we to-day have "one faith."* (*Acts xvii.* 1–15.)

PREPARATION

Who wrote Acts? When did S. Luke join S. Paul? (Acts xvi. 6–10, Lesson XXIX). What change did we notice in the telling of the story? What does "we" show? What "they"?

Read xvii. 1–4, and work out story with class. Who are "they"? Why not "we"? Where is S. Luke then? &c. Left behind at Philippi (accounts for growth of Philippian Church as shown by Epistle): S. Paul and Silas (see map) follow the great highway (Via Egnatia) through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica—three stages of about thirty miles each.

PRESENTATION

I. *The City of Thessalonica.*—(Teacher will use this at discretion.) What of Thessalonica to-day? Salonica, second city of Turkey in Europe, over 150,000 inhabitants, recently taken by Greeks and Bulgarians. Known as the Orthodox City. Resisted long and bravely in old days against the Turks. What was it like in S. Paul's time? A great commercial city; formerly called Therma, from hot-springs, (*cf.* Bath, Tunbridge Wells, &c.), then in 315 B.C. renamed after the daughter of Philip of Macedon—made a free city under the Romans, with its own constitution (Acts xvii. 6, "politarchs"). What classes of people in such a city? Compare any large seaport and garrison town—Portsmouth, Plymouth, Liverpool, Hull—soldiers and sailors, rich and busy merchants, poor wanting work, porters, idlers—all sorts.

II. *The Preaching of S. Paul.*—How did S. Paul begin his work here? (Before answering let class look at 1 Thess. ii. 9.) He found work for himself: every Jew taught a trade, and S. Paul thus independent. Where and when does he begin to preach? Notice "synagogue"—many Jews here—not "a praying place" as at Philippi. What was his message? Let class work this out (see Lesson XXX). How received? Three classes of hearers? How often did S. Paul preach? This the beginning of the Church. Where did we learn more just now about S. Paul in Thessalonica? How many Epistles to Thessalonica have we?

Teacher will tell class of their special value (1) perhaps first Epistles we have written by S. Paul, (2) written within a few months of leaving Thessalonica.

What do they tell us about the Thessalonians? Read 1 Thess. i., and show how happy S. Paul was about them, their welcome, turning from idols to serve the living God, power of Holy Spirit, afflictions, &c.

Did all this happen in three weeks? No: some time must have passed between verses 4 and 5 of Acts xvii.

III. *The Opposition of the Jews.*—So far peace and happy work: now affliction. Read 5–9. Where does trouble come from? Why did Jews persecute? Jealousy of whom? Get story from class: S. Paul's headquarters at Jason's house—mob—riot—Apostle not there—Jason and others dragged before rulers—charges (*cf.* charges before Pilate)—dismissed on bail, these men are not the ringleaders.

IV. *S. Paul leaves for Berœa.*—The teacher will briefly summarise Acts xvii. 10–15 in his own words. Fear for Apostle's safety: sent to Berœa: a nobler people: well received: arrival of hostile Jews: S. Paul goes seawards, probably to Methone or Pydna (map), thence to Athens: Silas and Timothy left behind.

Note summons of verse 15, suggest that S. Paul was ill, hence endeavours to spare him at Thessalonica and Berœa.

Recapitulation:

The Work in Macedonia.—What has been done? Churches founded in Philippi and Thessalonica: seed sown in many hearts. Yet Apostle harshly treated and driven away. Did he despair? Note of Epistle to Philippians is joy. S. Paul believed in Jesus Christ. (*Cf.* Parables of Sower, Mustard Seed, and Leaven.) The handful of believers in Macedonia the firstfruits of Christian Europe.

APPLICATION

The Call to-day.—1. The promise of Mission Work: Europe was heathen once, and East helped West: what S. Paul did for us, we ought to do for others: West must help East.

2. The Christian Creed to-day links us to these first Christians; *cf.* S. Paul's message (xvii. 3) with the words of the Creed. One Lord, One Faith always.

3. Was S. Paul's work easy? Must we expect our lives to be easy? "He that cometh after Me . . ." See S. Matt. xvi. 24, &c.

Expression Work: (Older children.) Read 1 Thess. iii., and compare with Acts xvii. 14–16. Piece together story. Teacher will tell briefly how 1 Thess. came to be written. (Younger.) Make map of S. Paul's visit to Macedonia.

Hymn 263, A. and M., "Take up thy Cross, the Saviour said."

Lesson XXXIII. S. PAUL AT ATHENS

Aims: *To teach the story of the visit: to show why Athens failed to grasp the truth.* (*Acts xvii.* 16–34.)

PREPARATION

The City of Athens.—(The teacher will here describe and appeal to the imagination.) We left S. Paul waiting for his comrades to join him at Athens: try to picture this wonderful city of the old world, of which its people were so proud: its beautiful position, its glorious sunny climate, magnificent buildings and statues—still to-day the wonder and admiration of the world—the Acropolis, the Parthenon (show picture). Athenians famed for wisdom and love of beauty—here had lived the greatest statesmen, philosophers, poets, painters, orators, whose fame is known to-day after more than 2000 years: the city also famed for religion, the home of the old gods, temples and sacred statues everywhere: the great centre of culture and intellect—the University of the World. Here wealthy Romans sent their sons (as to-day we send to Oxford and Cambridge, *cf.* also "Rhodes" Scholars at Oxford); the city was adorned with gifts from all parts of the world.

PRESENTATION

I. *With S. Paul in Athens.*—Let us imagine ourselves with S. Paul, walking through the streets enjoying the beautiful sights. What shall we see? Streets thronged with students, learned philosophers with their classes gathered round them (compare open-air schools), little groups in keen discussion, seekers after knowledge and truth: on all sides the temples and statues of heathen gods, with festivals and sacrifices, but no knowledge yet of the One True God, of Jesus Christ the Saviour, of the power of the Holy Spirit. What would S. Paul be thinking and feeling? His heart is sore within him: so much religiousness, but no true religion.

II. *He preaches in the Synagogue.*—Does he despair and do nothing? No, he starts as usual with the synagogue and reasons with the Jews and devout persons. What would he say? (Lessons XXIX, XXX.) He gathers his audience, then boldly takes his place in the *Agora*—the market-place—a centre of the city life, general meeting-place of busy and idle, an audience always ready. Here Socrates used to talk 450 years before, and now a greater than he—S. Paul—daily proclaims a greater truth. What result? (Read xvii. 17–21.)

III. *The Invitation of the Stoics and Epicureans.*—Members of the two great schools of philosophy are attracted. Some sneer at him as a babbler—the Resurrection an idle story—others say that he is introducing a new god, but sufficiently interested to wish to know more (verse 21 hints that S. Luke regards the motive as curiosity). They

invite S. Paul to (or, according to Rackham, an official investigation, they lay hands upon him and examine him before) the court of the Areopagus.

IV. *The Unknown God.*—And there S. Paul before a wonderful Athenian audience proclaims *the Gospel for the Greeks* (verses 22–31).

1. You are so careful about religious things that you dedicate an altar to an Unknown God.
2. Him I declare to you.
3. Who and what is God ?
   Creator and ruler of the world :
   Does not *need* anything we can offer to Him, but
   Has made us all brothers, and
   Would have us seek Him as our Father.
   So far we have been ignorant, now we know through Jesus Christ.
4. Repent—prepare for the Great Judgment. This Jesus, Crucified and Risen again, will return.
5. HE is the Unknown God.

The result ? *Some welcome, some scorn the message.* At least seed has been sown : S. Paul leaves for Corinth.

APPLICATION

The Lesson of Athens.—S. Paul received kindly, why so little fruit ? Athenians too proud of their boasted wisdom. (See 1 Cor. i. 22–24.) Think how S. Paul, so learned and wise, learnt Christ—from humble Christians of Damascus. Had to be in earnest, humble and loving. God wants our hearts. So Athenians a warning against pride and an encouragement to humble-minded and ignorant (S. Matt. xi. 25). We can all find God in nature, &c., if we will seek Him truly and humbly. He is revealed most clearly in Christ. Humility, love, wisdom, all lead to God : He wants all our powers (S. Mark xii. 30).

Expression Work : Read carefully 1 Cor. i. 18 to end, and try to give any instances from the Bible and history to prove verse 27. (Samuel and Eli : Amos vii. 14–16 : SS. Peter and John before Sanhedrin : Christian slaves before the Emperors, &c.)

N.B.—*Stoics, &c.*—Teacher can explain according to capacity of class : many schools of philosophy in Athens : two most famous : Stoics (*stoa* = a porch, where the philosophers gave their instruction) sought virtue and happiness in duty : Epicureans (from founder Epicurus) said aim of life was pleasure, that is, what we do must be with a view to happiness.

Stoic therefore stern and law-abiding, Epicurean inclined to be easy going and free from restraint. S. Paul would approve much in Stoic as leading to Jesus Christ.

Hymn 210, A. and M., " Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost."

Lesson XXXIV. S. PAUL AT CORINTH

Aims. *In teaching the story to bring out clearly* (1) *the direct work of the Holy Spirit,* (2) *the dangers of worldly pleasure and indifference to truth.* (*Acts xviii.* 1–18.)

PREPARATION

The teacher will refer to the last lesson. Was S. Paul satisfied with his visit? What had been the chief obstacle? He now comes to a very different city. Athens a centre of learning, Corinth of commerce. Compare Oxford and Liverpool.

PRESENTATION

I. *The City of Corinth.*—Show map, Corinth on two seas, meeting place then of East and West: ships dragged across isthmus. Why? Fear of Cape Malea. Compare Cape Horn. Nero began a canal, not finished till modern times. Compare Suez and Panama.

Encourage class to suggest their own ideas of the city: bring out its wealth and importance: ships and people of all nations: pleasure-loving and, alas! immoral. They needed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Why? What difference would it make in their lives?

II. *S. Paul's arrival.*—Read 1–4: alone, begins at once: first seeks work for himself: tentmaking: meeting with Aquila and Priscilla. Who were they? Why there? (Claudian Edict A.D. 49, banished Jews from Rome.) Perhaps already Christians, entertain S. Paul and become valued friends and helpers.

III. *His Missionary Work.*—Class from previous lessons will tell where S. Paul begins and what he says. The teacher will read verse 5, and in briefly explaining "he was pressed in spirit," *i.e.* he was driven by the Holy Spirit to preach, will suggest that he had been unwell, tired and anxious, and alone, and now with Silas and Timothy to help him, and cheering news from Macedonia, he is himself again and eager to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. *N.B.*—R.V. "constrained by the word," *i.e.* he must preach.

IV. *Rejected by Jews he turns to Gentiles* (verses 6–8).—Class will read silently and teacher will briefly summarise, noting the black clouds of apparent failure, the silver lining in the faith of Crispus, &c. S. Paul

had perhaps been unwell, he was probably much depressed. Did God forget him? No. As at Troas, so now at Corinth. (Recall Lesson XXIX, and compare strongly.)

V. *A Heavenly Vision.*—What was the message? (verses 9 and 10). What was the result? (verse 11). New courage, a long stay, and from evidence of two Epistles to Corinthians the founding of an important Church. Were S. Paul's troubles all over? (verses 12–17). No. His old enemies the Jews bring charges, as before at Philippi and Thessalonica. What? Taken before Gallio. What happens? The Greeks and Gentiles revenge themselves on Jews for interference. Gallio looks on: he cared for none of these things. What things? Either the beating of Sosthenes or the preaching of S. Paul, *i.e.* the message of Jesus Christ. Gallio ought to have cared. He is known to have been a man of highest ability, character, and amiability, before him on trial was S. Paul, the messenger of Jesus Christ, how sad that because he cared for none of these things he lost the chance of his life: and so his name to-day is a proverbial expression for anyone cold-hearted and indifferent who loses an opportunity through "not caring."

Teacher will then finish the story of the visit from verse 18, and by recapitulation bring out the following:

APPLICATION

1. As at Athens "worldly wisdom" hindered the Athenians from accepting the truth of Jesus Christ, so here at Corinth "worldly pleasure." God means us to be happy, it is only selfish pleasure that shuts our hearts to Him. Use the petition of the Litany from all the "deceits of the world, in all time of our wealth, good Lord deliver us."

2. The danger of "indifference": in small matters as well as big. Examples from school and home life: attention to lessons: helping mother: everything matters: do not let things go: we all have a part to play. We are all using or neglecting opportunities. A sculptor has made a statue of opportunity with covered face and winged feet, suggesting that while we wait for her unveiling she flies away.

Expression Work: 1. S. Paul's example and teaching on the dignity of labour. See Offertory Sentences.
2. The story of Aquila and Priscilla.

Hymn 282, A. and M., "Be Thou my Guardian and my Guide."

Lesson XXXV. BACK TO ASIA MINOR: S. PAUL AT EPHESUS

Aims. *To teach* (1) *how God prepared the way at Ephesus for S. Paul:* (2) *the work of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.* (*Acts xviii.* 18–*xix.* 7.)

PREPARATION

Teacher briefly recalls visit to Athens, the great university city, and to Corinth, the commercial city: now begins story of Ephesus. See Acts xvi. 6–7. S. Paul's wish now fulfilled. Three parts in story of visits to Ephesus (xviii. 18 to end). 1. S. Paul's flying visit (verses 19–21). 2. The coming and work of Apollos (verses 24–26). 3. S. Paul's return and long stay (chapter xix.).

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Paul's Vow* (xviii. 18).—Why a flying visit? Vow (*cf.* Nazarite, Samson) shows that S. Paul observed law as a Jew; probably to keep shaven till he reaches Jerusalem. Why? Thanksgiving for deliverance from danger; or, because of Jewish hostility must visit Jerusalem, and will not turn aside till task is done. Hence *a flying visit* now, promises to return if God will. Class read silently verses 18–23. Teacher to save time will point out route on map, remind class of the difficulties of travel then, and bring out S. Paul's activity and personal power through Holy Spirit. S. Paul returns as promised to Ephesus: about six months have passed: meantime God not idle: ground prepared: how? (verses 24–28).

II. *The Coming of Apollos.*—What is said about him? a Jew, of Alexandria, an important Jewish community, learned, mighty in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, fervent in spirit, preaches Jesus, but knows only John's baptism. Speaks boldly in synagogue as a Jew to Jews like S. Paul: his message? where would it stop? Does not know Christian Baptism, or the Gift of Pentecost. Picture joyful surprise of Aquila and Priscilla at his eloquent help, they now gladly tell him more of the truth. What would follow? Baptism and the laying on of hands, probably by Silas and Timothy acting for the Apostle.

III. *Apollos goes to Corinth.*—Eager to work: God finds an opening. Where? Class read verse 27. Possibly some Corinthians there urge him to go. Just the man needed. Why? Learned, eloquent, enthusiastic. What does he do? Class will put verses 27 and 28 into their own words. Teacher will show that Apollos preaches Christ as S. Paul had done.

IV. *S. Paul and Apollos.*—Teacher will now finish the story of Apollos.

Refer to 1 Cor. iii. 4–6, 21–23 :—Apollos very successful at Corinth, some admirers threaten to make a party and so destroy the unity of the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. xvi. 12). Apollos fearing this withdraws from Corinth, joins S. Paul at Ephesus, and is unwilling to go back probably until danger of division over : loyal to S. Paul. Later life unknown. Some people suppose he wrote the beautiful Epistle to the Hebrews. Go back to S. Paul.

V. *S. Paul returns to Ephesus : The Twelve Disciples of John.*—Read xix. 1–7. Apollos has left for Corinth, and S. Paul, his visits to the Galatian Churches over, has reached Ephesus at last. Work opens with a touching incident : meets 12 disciples, who, like Apollos, knew only John's baptism : they believed in Jesus as Messiah but had no knowledge of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, they are now baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, S. Paul lays his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost comes upon them, and as at Pentecost His coming is seen in gifts of tongues and prophecy.

VI. *The Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

1. *In Baptism.*—Refer to S. Matt. iii. 11 : John's baptism preparatory and symbolic of needed cleansing : the baptism of Jesus is (*a*) the appointed means of entrance into the Kingdom (S. John iii. 5, and S. Matt. xxviii. 19) ; (*b*) for the washing away of sins (Acts ii. 38) ; (*c*) conveys the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. *In Confirmation.*—Compare Acts xix. 1–7 with viii. 12–17 ; both exactly resemble Confirmation, with the same four marks as to-day :

Then : 1. The laying on of hands
2. By an Apostle of the Church
3. Administered to the baptized
4. Conveying the gift of the Spirit.

To-day : 1. Confirmation or laying on of hands
2. By a Bishop
3. Administered to the baptized
4. Conveying the gift of the Spirit.

APPLICATION

How do we account for the institution of Confirmation ? (Lesson II.) How should we regard it ? A special gift of Holy Spirit : we become full members of the Church, renew our baptismal vows in our own name and claim place in Christ's army.

Expression Work : Write out the four marks of Confirmation to-day, and show how they agree with the two accounts of the Apostolic practice in Acts viii. and xix.

Hymn 209, A. and M., "Come, gracious Spirit, heavenly Dove."

Lesson XXXVI. THE LONG STAY AT EPHESUS

Aims. *To show the steady progress of the Church: and S. Paul's triumph in the name of Christ.* (*Acts xix.* 8–*xx.* 1.)

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson: ground prepared (1) by Apollos: (2) the baptized 12 disciples of John: also (3) work of Priscilla and Aquila. All now ready. Where does S. Paul begin? What is his message? Class tell this and read xix. 8, 9. The result? Jews are hardened and blaspheme the name of Christ. S. Paul separates his disciples, abandons the synagogue and preaches openly to the Gentiles, reasoning daily, arguing and pleading for the truth in the *school* of Tyrannus.

N.B.—Word will interest class: remind them of the outdoor life of the old world, picture the gardens, colonnades, gymnasia, baths, and halls for lectures: school a Greek word meaning "leisure"—free time for hearing such things, then applied to the lecture, then the place.

PRESENTATION

I. *Importance of Ephesus.*—What was Ephesus like? What sort of gathering would S. Paul have? Map: on the sea, central position, trade routes of East and West by sea and land, a wealthy commercial centre, larger than Corinth: therefore a gathering of all nations, Jews, Greeks, &c.: also the capital of the Roman province of Asia, important city: also the centre of the worship of Artemis or Diana: the great temple of the goddess one of the wonders of the world: large establishments of priests and ministers: unhappily a debased and wicked worship, vice and passion fostered by religion: the city also famed for magic, curious arts flourished, the "Ephesian letters" were well-known forms of incantation, Greek culture and philosophy mixed with Eastern superstition.

(*N.B.*—Teacher will use the above at his discretion: he can picture various scenes by familiar illustrations according to place, *e.g.* in London, S. Paul's Cathedral, a great procession, &c., the point is to give an idea of the greatness of the city—its wealth, immoral state and superstition, and therefore to emphasize the wonderful triumph of S. Paul in the name of Christ.)

What a field of work for S. Paul! How deeply the city needed the message of Jesus Christ!

II. *Triumphs in the Name of Jesus Christ.*—Chapter xix. a series of pictures of victory in the name of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit: first, Apollos convinced and made a powerful witness for Christ: then the 12 disciples of John, baptized and confirmed.

Now we see (teacher will write summary on blackboard or bring prepared bold summary, asking class to read passages silently and suggest headings)—

(xix. 8.) 1. Bold preaching in the synagogue for three months.

(xix. 9, 10.) 2. Public teaching in the school of Tyrannus for two years.

(xix. 11, 12.) 3. Special miracles wrought by God through S. Paul: (*a*) sick healed, (*b*) devils vanquished.

(xix. 13–16.) 4. The seven sons of Scæva, an exorcist (professed to cast out spirits) put to shame.

(xix. 17–20.) 5. Wonderful victory in name of Jesus Christ: (*a*) People give up their "curious arts," (*b*) books of magic burnt. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

III. *Riot at Ephesus.*—But trouble yet to come. Whose was great temple? Diana's. People came from all parts. Imagine yourselves from country at Westminster Abbey or S. Paul's. Like to take away remembrance: postcards, &c.: at Ephesus little silver shrines: a great industry, many people employed: S. Paul's success hurts their trade: believers in Christ do not think it right to buy: hence work-people headed by Demetrius, and supported probably by priests of Diana, call a meeting, raise a riot against S. Paul: town clerk tries to pacify them, S. Paul and his comrades not robbers; if wrongdoers, summon them to the law courts, rioting will bring trouble.

IV. *Departure of S. Paul for Macedonia.*—What did S. Paul do? (xix. 21). Had already meant to go on to Macedonia, and so (xx. 1), having founded the Church in Ephesus, he bids farewell to the Ephesian Christians and starts on his journey.

APPLICATION

Under Christ's Banner.—Ask class to repeat their baptismal vow of obedience, "manfully to fight under Christ's banner," &c. This S. Paul's work at Ephesus: the sin of the wicked lives which the Ephesians were ignorantly leading, the world in all the love of wealth and ease which was shutting their hearts to God, the devil in the magic and superstition which they practised. It is what all Christians have to do, and the same Holy Spirit which helped S. Paul to victory helps us to-day.

Expression Work: Lesson next time "the Church at Ephesus." Invite class to read Acts xx. 17 to end, and to write down anything that tells them about this Church in this passage.

Hymn 215, A. and M., "The Church's one foundation."

Lesson XXXVII. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Aim. *To show* (1) *the value of the Epistles as illuminating the Acts:* (2) *that there was an organised Church at Ephesus.*

PREPARATION

Meaning of the word "Church."—We said last time that we should learn to-day about the "Church" at Ephesus: Look at a daily paper, different headings for different parts (produce paper and show foreign, commercial, financial sporting intelligence): what is part headed dealing with Church matters? Ecclesiastical. Two words to consider, Church and Ecclesia.

Put on blackboard KRK. What is a church called in Scotland? Fill in letters K_IRK, or old fashion K_YRK_E. Can anyone tell what the responses to the 10 commandments in the Communion Service are called? Kyries: the Greek for "O Lord": say response in full. Kirk or Church is from the Greek adjective KURIAKE, meaning the house or household (understood), "belonging to the Lord."

Ecclesia, another Greek word meaning a body "called out" or "selected"—compare Catechism, "all the elect people of God." When were we called out and made members of Christ's ecclesia? At baptism. When were we specially marked out as "belonging to the Lord" or "Churchmen"? At baptism, "wherein I was made," &c. Thus the Church means first the company of baptized Christians called out to serve Christ and belonging to the Lord. (See S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

PRESENTATION

I. *Marks of the Church.*—Is this all? Were the first Christians content with this only? See Acts ii. 42: we said (Lesson V) that there were four marks of the Church. Name them. 1. The Apostles' teaching; 2. The Apostles' fellowship; 3. The breaking of bread; and 4. The prayers. If there was a proper Church at Ephesus we expect to find the Ephesians following the teaching of the Apostles, with regular officers, keeping the Holy Communion, and with proper arrangements for worship and prayer.

II. *The Evidence of the Acts and Epistles.*—Where did we find information about Corinth and Philippi and Thessalonica apart from the Acts? In Epistles to Corinthians, &c. Have we an Epistle to Ephesians? Teacher will explain briefly: was a circular letter meant to be sent from Church to Church in Asia. Any other Epistle to Ephesus or to any one at Ephesus? Refer to 1 Timothy i. 3, and tell class Timothy was Bishop at Ephesus, and two letters written to him. Four sources now of information: Acts, Ephesians, and 1 and 2 Timothy.

Our work to-day to discover from these sources that there was a real Church at Ephesus.

Turn to Acts xx. 17–38 (teacher must summarise), an address by S. Paul to "the elders of the Church" of Ephesus called to meet him at Miletus. (Compare an Episcopal charge to clergy to-day.)

N.B.—He calls them (verse 28) "episcopi," or overseers to feed the flock of God—origin of our "bishop" (Lessons XXIV and XXVIII).

Verses 20, 25, 27, and 35 show that S. Paul had taught and they received the teaching of "the Kingdom of God." Evidence of an ordained ministry and acceptance of the Apostles' teaching and fellowship.

1 Tim. iii. and v. give instructions for the conduct of elders or overseers (episcopi) and deacons.

1 Tim. v. 22 shows that Timothy had power to ordain, and was therefore a bishop.

1 Tim. ii. 1–8 directions for the conduct of public worship, prayer, thanksgiving, &c.

Thus three of the marks: why no mention of "the breaking of bread"? Because all baptized Christians then knew that Jesus Christ had told them to share in it and obeyed: "This do in remembrance of Me."

Teacher cannot deal with Epistle to Ephesians, but should note following passages: i. 1, "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus," *i.e.* baptized Christians; i. 22–23, "Church which is His body," we are "members of Christ"; i. 13 and iv. 30, the sealing of the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation; iv. 1–6, the Unity of the Church—One Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church.

III. *The Church at Ephesus a true Church.*—Thus the class can see that within a few years of S. Paul's visit there was at Ephesus a body of baptized Christians,

holding the faith and practice taught by the Apostles,
with Church officers or clergy under their Bishop Timothy,
with proper arrangements for worship and work.

This was the Church at Ephesus.

APPLICATION

Read Collect for S. Simon and S. Jude, and repeat the statements of the Creed: the Church to-day One in Faith and Foundation Stone of Jesus Christ: Holy, because all are dedicated by baptism and calling: Catholic or universal for all times and peoples: Apostolic, as following teaching of Apostles received from Jesus Christ.

Conclude with Eph. iv. 1. as prayer "That we may walk worthy."

Expression Work: 1. Learn Ephesians iv. 1–6.

2. (for elder children). Encourage to refer to Ordination Service, and compare charge to Priests with S. Paul's address to Ephesian Elders.

Hymn 354, A. and M., "The earth, O Lord, is one wide field."

Lesson XXXVIII. A SUNDAY IN TROAS

Aim. *To teach from the example of the early Christians the true observance of the Lord's Day.* (*Acts xx.* 1–12.)

PREPARATION

S. Paul leaves Ephesus.—Our last three lessons about Ephesus. How long had S. Paul been there? More than two years: what result? A strong Church founded. In spite then of riot we see a happy S. Paul starting to revisit his dear people in Macedonia. Read xx. 1–5. How would he go, and where? Map.

PRESENTATION

I. *Visits Macedonia.*—Notice three months' stay in Greece. What cities would he visit? (Athens, Corinth.) Then back to Macedonia? Why? Verse 3. Jews waiting to injure him at port of Corinth or Athens. So back through friendly people. Notice companions, where do they come from? Different Churches; proud to be mission-workers with S. Paul. They start first and wait for S. Paul at Troas. He goes to Philippi: who there? How do we know this? (Read verse 6.) The "we" shows that S. Luke, left at Philippi, (Lesson XXXII) is with him again. What time of year is it? (verse 6). What great Festival had S. Paul been keeping? Picture the happy Easter Communion at Philippi.

II. *Sails to Troas.*—Now he must push on for Jerusalem: sails for Troas, five days back, but only took two to cross (xvi. 11). Why so long? baffling winds. Reaches Troas, spends a week.

III. S. Luke tells us of *a wonderful Sunday.* Read verses 7–12 very carefully, and get the class to picture out the incidents:

1. Christians gather together to break bread, *i.e.* the Holy Communion.
2. When? At night. Why? The only time when the poorer Christians, many slaves, could come, also safer.
3. S. Paul's address long: much to tell them, and advice to give. Farewell words from your best friend do not seem long.
4. The room? Upper chamber, many lights, people, very hot: some get sleepy.
5. Eutychus sitting by window of third story falls out in sleep, taken up dead or unconscious.
6. S. Paul restores him.
7. Joy of disciples.
8. The evening meal.

Three very important things here:

1. *The Observance of the Christian Sunday.*—The Lord's Day—The Day of Worship. Why changed from Jewish Rest-Day? Because on this day—the first day of the week—Jesus rose from the dead: on this day the Holy Spirit descended. (Quote Hymns 34, 35, 36, A. and M.) Wonderful witness of the truth of the Resurrection.

2. *The Form of Worship.*—How was it kept? The Holy Communion as from the first. (Lesson V.) Teacher will tell clearly the story of Pliny's letter A.D. 100 to the Emperor Trajan. Pliny, governor of Bithynia, asks how he ought to deal with Christians. He has found them on inquiry such good and peaceable citizens that he writes a report to the Emperor to tell him. In this he says (*a*) how they were wont to meet together on a fixed day before it was light and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as God (service on Sunday morning early); (*b*) bind themselves by an oath not to commit any wrong; (*c*) before separating shared in a common meal. (Holy Communion followed by Agape or Love Feast.)

3. The Agape or Love Feast—(*a*) Originally the Holy Communion was, in imitation of the Last Supper, celebrated at the close of or during a common meal. (*b*) 1 Cor. xi. 20–22 and 34 shows that there were grave objections to this. (*c*) Thus S. Paul coming from Corinth to Troas deliberately placed the Holy Communion before the Agape (verse 11). When he was come up again and had broken bread (R.V. the bread, *i.e.* of the Eucharist) and eaten (or made the meal, *i.e.* the Agape or Love Feast), he departed. (*d*) The two were gradually and entirely separated, and the practice of celebrating the Holy Communion at an early hour of the day became general.

N.B.—The teacher will avoid controversy, which is unwholesome especially for young children, and teach facts. If the question of Evening Communion is raised, it may be replied that the Church for more than eighteen centuries has encouraged the early Communion: that there is no better way in which to dedicate the day and ourselves to God's service in thankful remembrance of the death for us of His Son our Lord.

APPLICATION

How to Keep the Lord's Day.—(1) The Christian Sunday is a day of worship commemorating the Resurrection and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. (2) The Holy Communion is the Lord's Service on the Lord's Day.

Expression Work: Give some titles for the Holy Communion, and show what is the special meaning and purpose of each.

Hymn 321, A. and M., "We pray Thee, heavenly Father."

Lesson XXXIX. THE TEMPTATION OF S. PAUL

Aim. *To show S. Paul's faithfulness and courage in temptation.* (*Acts xx.* 36–*xxi.* 15.)

PREPARATION

Picture a great ship leaving for Canada or Australia or distant port: the farewells of parents, friends, &c. Have any read the story of the Pilgrim Fathers? the departure of the *Mayflower*, the prayers and tears. Sorry to say good-bye, may not see friends again.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Departure from Miletus.*—Read for yourselves xx. 36–38, the good-bye of S. Paul to the Ephesian Elders: picture the scene. Why did they weep? Good-bye to one they loved, and perhaps, as he said, the last good-bye.

Go on board with S. Paul and with maps follow his course while I read—Cos, Rhodes, Patara, probably by little coasting vessel—here a big merchant ship going to Phœnicia, change to that. Pass Cyprus, reach Tyre: Christian disciples: a week's stay. Who with him? S. Luke "we," and probably some of those mentioned in xx. 4.

II. *The Warning at Tyre.*—Whither bound? Jerusalem. Why? Let class suggest. He had long wished to go again (xx. 16), the Holy City where Jesus taught, died, and rose again. Old friends of early days there, the central meeting-place of the Church, great work to do: many reasons, he was taking also the money collected for the poor saints at Jerusalem to which his dear Macedonians, poor as they were, had contributed (2 Cor. viii. 1–4). S. Paul wants to go, feels he ought to go, and yet it is very dangerous. Why? The Jews hated him; witness treatment at Thessalonica, the pursuit from place to place, plot to kill him (xx. 3) on board ship. Now a special warning. Read xxi. 4. Does S. Paul turn back? No. What would he do? Class suggest. Sought God's will in prayer and followed His guidance. He tells friends that he must go on, and so (xxi. 5, 6) another touching farewell.

III. *S. Paul reaches Cæsarea: Stays with Philip the Evangelist.*—By ship (map) to Ptolemais, one day's halt: on to Cæsarea, S. Paul and his company stay with Philip the Evangelist (Lesson XII). Class will briefly recall Philip's ordination (vi. 5) as one of the seven with Stephen.

Why would this appeal to S. Paul? The Martyrdom and Prayer. An old saying, "If Stephen had not prayed, the Church would not have had Paul." Philip's work in Samaria. Think of the joy of exchanging experiences: the power of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Remember S. Luke was there, collecting materials for history we are reading to-day. Philip's work in Samaria; conversion of eunuch from his own lips. Cornelius the centurion (x. 1) lived at Cæsarea, who sent the message to S. Peter (Lesson XVIII).

IV. *The Warning Repeated: Prophecy of Agabus.*—Class read silently xxi. 8–14, and tell story: 1. Philip and his four daughters inspired with the gift of prophecy. 2. S. Paul hastening for Jerusalem, yet tarries here: much to discuss with Philip and others. 3. The warning of Agabus and appeals of friends.

V. *The Temptation of S. Paul.*—Picture strongly: work waiting, God calling, and in front danger, possibly death. What should he do? Why not stay there where he was happy, go back to Macedonia, plenty there to do for God. Compare the Agony in the Garden: "If it be possible . . ." S. Paul decides as Jesus had decided. Read aloud (xxi. 13) the courageous answer, and the solemn approval of the little company.

VI. *S. Paul reaches Jerusalem.*—The way is now clear (verses 15–17): S. Paul and his company with some disciples from Cæsarea start for Jerusalem seventy miles away, are heartily welcomed and lodge with Mnason, an old disciple.

APPLICATION

S. Paul's Faithfulness and Courage.—Have spoken of S. Paul's temptation: the call to Jerusalem and the warning of danger: he had altered plans before (at Damascus, Acts ix. 23–25; in Greece, xx. 3): why not avoid danger now? Acts xx. 23–24. It is God's call: God needed him, and so he must go. A lesson of splendid faith and courage to us. We must not rush into danger ("Lead us not into temptation"), but we must not turn back if God calls, however hard it be. God does not overtry us; nay, He provides the way to escape (1 Cor. x. 13). We must feel with S. Paul, "I can do all things," &c. (Phil. iv. 13).

Expression Work: Meaning of the word temptation? Show that temptation is not sin (Heb. iv. 15). Write out Heb. ii. 18; James i. 12, encouragements to faithfulness in temptation.

Hymn 265, A. and M., "Thy way, not mine, O Lord."

Lesson XL. S. PAUL AT JERUSALEM—THE ARREST

Aim. *To show how S. Paul proclaimed by word and deed the Gospel to the Gentiles: the Church is to be One and Catholic or Universal.* (*Acts xxi.* 17–*xxii.* 24.)

PREPARATION

S. Paul at Jerusalem.—If a missionary Bishop to-day came to London from abroad to report his work to the head of the Church, where would he go? To Archbishop at Lambeth or Bishop at Fulham. Where does S. Paul go at Jerusalem? To S. James. (See Lessons XX and XXV.) Who are there? Read xxi. 18–19. "Us," S. Paul's comrades including S. Luke, and all the elders, *i.e.* the leaders or clergy. What should we call such a meeting to-day? Explain Diocesan Conference, perhaps a Bishops' meeting at Lambeth.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Conference with S. James.*—What has S. Paul to tell? Work among Gentiles. What other Apostles or leading disciples had done similar work? S. Peter (Lesson XVIII), S. Philip (Lessons XIII, XIV). How do they receive the news? Glorify God.

II. *The Hostility of the Jews to S. Paul.*—Class read silently xxi. 20–21. A danger: reports about S. Paul's teaching. What? Were they true? No. What did S. Paul really teach? Romans ii. 28–29.

III. *A Plan to Win their Favour.*—Read verses 22–24. A plan suggested to show that S. Paul does not disregard the Law? What? To help four poor Jewish Christians to complete their Nazarite vow. (Num. vi. 13–21. S. Paul would pay for the offerings and shaving of heads: probably thanksgiving for deliverance from danger or sickness.)

S. Paul agrees, it being made quite clear (verses 25–26) that Gentiles are not compelled to observe such laws, although they keep to the agreement of the Council of Jerusalem (Lesson XXV).

IV. *Failure: S. Paul in Peril of Death.*—Why did plan fail? (Verses 27–30.) Some Jews from Asia, possibly Ephesus, recognise S. Paul, and seeing Trophimus an Ephesian and therefore a Gentile, with him in the streets or even in the outer court of the Temple accuse Apostle falsely of polluting it by bringing Gentiles beyond the partition wall. Show plan of Temple with middle wall of partition (Eph. ii. 14) dividing Court of Gentiles from Israelites, and quote inscriptions on pillars forbidding any stranger to pass on pain of death. What happened? S. Paul in Temple with Nazarites, cry raised, rage of Jews, riot, S. Paul seized, hurried from sacred enclosure (they cannot

kill him there) into outer court, gates shut, begin to beat him. What saved him? (verses 31–36).

V. *Rescued by the Roman soldiers.*—Let class tell story, show from plan (and photo or sketch) how the Roman soldiers of the garrison came down the stairs from the Tower of Antonia, and carried S. Paul to save him from the frantic hatred of the Jews.

VI. *S. Paul's speech upon the Stairs.*—Picture scene vividly: stairway defended by Roman soldiers, surging mob in court below, the Roman captain and S. Paul, already roughly handled. Afraid? No. Read verses 37–40. The captain took him for an Egyptian who had recently led an insurrection and escaped; S. Paul explains who he is, and asks leave to speak. Let class tell story as told before in Acts ix. angry mob impressed by Apostle's courage listen attentively, and the teacher tells class that it is practically the same except verse 21. Read this and compare ix. 15. What happens? (verses 22–24).

VII. *Tumult renewed: S. Paul in Roman hands.*

APPLICATION

A Prisoner for the Gentiles.—Why were Jews so angry? Jealous at call of Gentiles. Did S. Paul invent this? No. Where did he learn it? From Jesus Christ (xxii. 21). Read Eph. iii. 1–12. What does he call this wonderful truth? The mystery of Christ. Explain word: Greek *muō*, to close lips; class say *muō*, mystery, and see that they must close lips to shape words—thus a solemn secret, hidden before, but now revealed. Had our Lord prepared the way? Yes: by word and deed. (See Lesson XVIII.) What happened to Him at Nazareth? See S. Luke iv. 25–29. Treated like S. Paul. S. Luke remembers this and Christ's words, "If they persecute Me," &c. For whose sake then was S. Paul a prisoner? See Eph. iii. 1. Meaning of Gentiles? Did S. Paul refuse to admit Jews into Christ's Church? Whom did he want to come in? All, Jews and Gentiles. What word do we use in the Creed to show this? Catholic or Universal. Thus S. Paul a prisoner for the sake of the truth of the One Holy Catholic Church. Ready for prison and death that world may know and believe that "Jesus died for all." Class will read Gal. iii. 26–28.

Expression Work: Collect passages in which S. Paul speaks of "the mystery" of the Call of the Gentiles (Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Eph. i. 9, 10; iii. 3–6; vi. 19–20).

Draw a plan of the Temple, showing the different Courts and the Tower of Antonia.

Hymn 108, A. and M., "When I survey the wondrous Cross."

Lesson XLI. BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

Aim. *To bring out the training of S. Paul's character by the Way of the Cross.* (*Acts xxii.* 24–*xxiii.* 11; *cf. ix.* 15–16.)

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson. Picture scene by reminding class of *Ivanhoe*, the holding of the gate. S. Paul's rescue from the angry Jews: his speech upon the stairs, the renewed outbreak, carried into the castle.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Paul and Lysias.*—Class read silently xxii. 24–29. What did chief captain propose to do to S. Paul? Scourge him. Why? To get information. Who would carry out command? Centurion. What does S. Paul do? Protest. Why? A Roman's rights. Illegal to scourge a Roman, still more if uncondemned. Had this happened before? Yes, at Philippi (*cf.* Acts xvi. 22, and Lesson XXXI). What followed then? Where does S. Paul refer to his scourgings? 2 Cor. xi. 23–25. Does he complain of his sufferings? No, he glories in, is proud of them (verse 30). Name of chief captain? Lysias. (See xxiii. 26.) What did Lysias do when centurion told him? Came to S. Paul: describe interview graphically: S. Paul, torn, dusty, chained, probably bleeding: Lysias' surprise, "*Thou* a Roman?" and afraid because S. Paul had been bound. Quote old saying from Cicero, "a bold deed to bind a Roman, a crime to beat him." Lysias releases S. Paul from bonds and calls the Sanhedrin to meet him.

II. *Before the Sanhedrin.*—What does the word mean? Council. Who were its members? Chief Jews: priests and elders, scribes and lawyers, presided over by the High Priest. Where have we heard of them before? The Trial of our Lord: SS. Peter and John: condemned Stephen. Where did they meet usually? In Temple. Was it so now? Probably not. Why? An informal meeting called by Lysias, who, a Gentile, is present.

III. *The High Priest's cruelty: S. Paul's anger and regret.*—Let class read xxii. 30 and xxiii. 1–5, and tell story. Why did not S. Paul recognise High Priest? Probably owing to informal character of meeting, High Priest was not in distinctive robes: possibly also S. Paul short-sighted. (Lessons XV and XXIX.) Notice immediate regret when told.

IV. *The Council divided.*—Hard to explain what follows: suggest that

S. Paul was rightly angry at treatment, no justice was to be had from Council; knowing the bitter antagonism of Pharisees and Sadducees proclaims himself, as he was, a Pharisee (Phil. iii. 5), and says that, as was the case, he was being attacked as a preacher of the Resurrection. The Council at once divided. Read verses 7–10. Dispute so bitter that Lysias, fearing for S. Paul, now treated as a Roman citizen, again carries him away to safety.

V. *Back to the Castle: The Vision of Hope.*—Try to realise S. Paul's position: why had he come to Jerusalem? To make peace: to show that he loved his nation: that his mission to the Gentiles was God's direct command: that Jesus Christ was the Saviour of both Jew and Gentile, in Him all were one.

With what result? Apparently everything had gone wrong. The Jews more bitter than ever: trying to kill him: the plan to win favour had led to a dangerous riot: he was only safe if he remained practically a prisoner in the Roman barracks, separated from his friends, unable to work. What would his feelings be? Almost of despair. Had God forgotten him? (verse 11). As at Corinth (Lesson XXXIV), and later (in Acts xxvii. 23–24), in the terrible storm the Lord stood by him and comforted him. His work not over. As he has witnessed at Jerusalem, so he shall yet do at Rome itself.

APPLICATION

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.—We know how S. Paul would have felt now. New courage, new hope. God was with him. What a part this faith plays in S. Paul's life. "I can do all things through Christ . . ." (Phil. iv. 13). "All things work together for good . . ." (Rom. viii. 28). The things that seemed against him all turned out for good (Phil. i. 12). What a wonderful experience! But is it only S. Paul's? No. The missionary, the clergyman, when things seem hopeless; thousands in trial and sorrow, have found the same. And so may we in all our troubles and temptations, however small or big. Always a vision of God, Jesus Christ at our side, the Holy Spirit's whisper of comfort, "I will not fail thee . . ." (Gen. xxviii. 15; Josh. i. 5; Heb. xiii. 5, 6).

Expression Work: 1. Describe S. Paul's Visions and how they helped him (Acts ix. 3–6; xvi. 9, 10; xviii. 9, 10; xxii. 17–21; xxvii. 22–25).

2. Refer to Phil. iii. 3–6; Rom. xi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 22, and show that S. Paul was proud of his Jewish birth and training.

Hymn 264, A. and M., "My God, my Father, while I stray."

Lesson XLII. THE PLOT AGAINST S. PAUL

Aim. *To bring out further that S. Paul the disciple is ready to suffer as Jesus his Lord suffered.* (*Acts xxiii.* 12–35.)

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson: where was S. Paul? Picture the angry disappointment of the Jews: he had been in their hands, now safe under Roman protection. Can they do nothing? Read xxiii. 12, 13. Note the character of the vow—they believe they are doing right—they regard S. Paul as an apostate, a faithless Jew, who ought to die.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Plot against S. Paul* (xxiii. 14, 15).—Describe plot—the wicked share of priests and elders. As they had bought Judas to betray Christ, so now they join in treacherous deceit to kill Paul—*cf.* illustrations from history, a pretended suppliant to get audience of and kill the king—if they can get near S. Paul they will kill him. Did plot succeed? Why not? (xxiii. 16–22). Class read silently and tell story: Paul's nephew hears of plot: tells Paul (*cf.* xxviii. 30 to show liberty to see friends enjoyed by a Roman awaiting trial, called *custodia libera*, "free custody"—chained to a soldier who was responsible for prisoner with life, otherwise able to see friends, do work, &c.). S. Paul sends for Lysias: Lysias sees Paul's nephew, hears the whole story, and sends him away pledged to silence. Let class realise the quiet, business-like character of the three concerned: everything done without fuss or panic.

II. *Lysias sends S. Paul under escort to Cæsarea.*—What did Lysias do now? (xxiii. 23, 24). Prepares escort: why so big—200 foot soldiers, 70 cavalry and 200 spearmen? A Jewish riot serious—Lysias responsible for peace of city. A Roman prisoner protected—will not risk his being taken and killed. S. Paul sent to Felix, the Governor at Cæsarea.

III. *The journey to Cæsarea.*—Map: graphic description: the escort: start at 9 P.M. (verse 23): S. Paul's feelings as he leaves Jerusalem: memory of his own expedition (ix. 1, 2) to stamp out the Christian faith for which he now suffers gladly: halt at Antipatris next day, 35 miles away: good marching: foot soldiers return: S. Paul and cavalry go on, reach Cæsarea, about 27 miles, at night or next morning:

news quickly spreads, Christians would see or hear of S. Paul's coming, a prisoner, and remember the warnings of Agabus and S. Paul's calm courage (xxi. 13). Within a fortnight all has come true.

IV. *Lysias' letter to Felix.*—One of the class will read letter (xxiii. 25–30) aloud, and class will explain incidents alluded to: the rescue at the stairs and S. Paul a Roman: the charge before Sanhedrin: the plot against S. Paul. Any omissions? The proposed scourging. Why left out?

V. *Felix decides to try the Case.*—Governor asks name of province: why? To know if he was right to try him, and to see if S. Paul was really a Roman. (*Cf.* Pilate's sending Jesus to Herod (S. Luke xxiii. 6, 7), because He came from Galilee.) Felix having satisfied himself agrees to hear the case when the accusers arrive. Meantime S. Paul as a Roman kept in free custody in Herod's palace, now residence of the Roman governor, and called, as was Pilate's house at Jerusalem, the Prætorium.

APPLICATION

S. Paul treads in his Master's steps.—Ask class to think of our Lord's trial, and compare with that of S. Paul: both rejected by their own nation, delivered up into the hands of the Gentiles—Pilate and Felix. S. Luke sees this, and from now to end of Acts seems to see the story of Jesus repeated in S. Paul.

What of S. Paul? remembers the vision (xxiii. 11), knows that he has said good-bye to Jerusalem, probably for ever, and that he is on his way to Rome.

Can the class suggest great words of our Lord about His followers of which S. Paul might well be thinking? "If any man will come after Me . . ." (S. Matt. xvi. 24). "The disciple is not above his Lord. If they have persecuted me . . ." (S. John xv. 20).

We have S. Paul chained to his guard waiting. What were the Christians in Cæsarea—Philip, Ananias, &c.—doing? We are sure that as Christians in Jerusalem prayed for S. Peter (Acts xii. 5), so in Cæsarea they prayed for S. Paul. What would their prayer be? What is the right prayer? "The will of the Lord be done" (Acts xxi. 14).

Expression Work: Compare the various trials of S. Paul with the Sevenfold trial of Jesus.

Hymn 279, A. and M., "O help us, Lord, each hour of need."

Lesson XLIII. S. PAUL BEFORE FELIX

Aim. *To teach the story of the trial, and lessons from the characters of Felix and S. Paul.* (*Acts xxiv.* 1–27.)

PREPARATION

S. Paul had already been brought before a Roman governor. Where? Who? Gallio at Corinth (Lesson XXXIV). Now before Felix the Procurator or Governor of Judæa—post formerly held by Pilate. A slave by birth, had risen through influence of his brother Pallas, favourite of Emperor Claudius, to high position: cruel, greedy, ambitious. Had done one good thing, put down brigandage. Long resident in Palestine, knew Jewish customs and the claims of the Christian faith. See how these things come out in the story.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Judgment-hall of Felix.*—Picture a Court of Justice to-day: judge, jury, accusers or plaintiffs, and accused or defendants, barristers who speak for the parties concerned, lawyers who advise them, witnesses and the public looking on. Read xxiv. 1, 2, and 10. Whom have we here? Felix the judge, Ananias, &c., accusers, S. Paul defendant, Tertullus barrister for Ananias and the elders, Jews as witnesses, and the public. No jury; S. Paul defends himself. Alone as Jesus was alone; God was with him.

II. *The Charges against S. Paul.*—Read verses 2–9 and analyse: Tertullus begins with compliment to Felix (how far true?), then three charges against S. Paul: (1) That he is a pestilent fellow—a public nuisance, stirring up sedition wherever he goes. Meaning? Compare S. Luke xxiii. 5: rebellion, high-treason against Emperor. (2) A ringleader of the Nazarenes. (*N.B.*—The Romans recognised the religion of a conquered country and protected it, as we in India, Africa, &c., protect the religion of Mahommedans, Hindus, &c.): Romans recognised Jews, but so far not Christians, here contemptuously called Nazarenes. Compare our Lord's title, "Jesus of Nazareth," on Cross, and Nathanael's words (S. John i. 46, and S. Matt. ii. 23). (3) Attempted to profane Temple: notice that Jews have altered charge (xxi. 28): they could not prove that S. Paul had taken a Gentile beyond the barrier, they now say that he attempted to do so. The Jews as witnesses for the High Priest support the charges.

III. *S. Paul's defence.*—Read verses 10–21, and work out reply: S. Paul's compliment to Felix, his knowledge of the Jews will enable him to judge fairly: he denies (1), admits (2), that he is a Nazarene, a

follower of "the Way," but urges that as such he serves the God of the Jews, keeps the law, and looks for a resurrection, *i.e.* a true Jew ought to become a Christian. (3) Far from profaning Temple he was there to worship, to fulfil a vow and bring alms to his nation.

Then note verses 19–21: S. Paul turns indignantly to the Jews and says, "Where are my accusers? What wrong do you charge me with except belief in the Resurrection?"

IV. *Felix defers Judgment.*—Class read verse 22, and suggest explanation: Felix knows more about Christianity than the Jews thought, they have not proved their case: on the plea of waiting for Lysias he postpones judgment. Meantime S. Paul left in "free custody" (Lesson XLII).

V. *Felix and S. Paul.*—Class read to end of chapter: bring out: 1. The sending for S. Paul. 2. Drusilla a Jewess, wife of another man, and wickedly married to Felix. Compare John Baptist, Herod and Herodias (Luke iii. 19 or Matt. xiv. 3, 4). 3. S. Paul, like Baptist, "boldly rebukes vice," preaches need of upright life, self-control, and certainty of judgment to come. 4. Felix moved, trembles (*cf.* James ii. 19: God wants not fear, but love and obedience); sends S. Paul away till convenient season.

Class study carefully verses 25, 26, and suggest character of Felix: only half believes, avarice stronger than faith.

S. Paul a prisoner at Cæsarea for two years. Idle? What would he do? Comrades and friends can come to him. Who in Cæsarea? (Lesson XXXIX). He can advise and direct. Some say wrote Epistles to Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon at this time. We shall see presently (Lesson XLVIII) reasons for believing these written later at Rome.

And S. Luke? Busy probably at his Gospel and preparation for Acts. Thus we see work for God however difficult the circumstances.

APPLICATION

A false Judge: A faithful Prisoner.—S. Luke's picture of Felix warns us against danger of greed or any passion which makes us put off repentance and true service to God. "No hurry, plenty of time," a deadly snare.

S. Paul a second Baptist. Read Collect for S. John the Baptist's Day. See S. Matt. v. 11. Blessing fulfilled in S. Paul's case. We must be bold, faithful, ready to suffer for truth.

Expression Work: Collect the notices of Cæsarea in the Acts and of the Christians who dwelt there.

Hymn 446, A. and M., "Oh! what, if we are Christ's."

Lesson XLIV. S. PAUL BEFORE FESTUS: THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR

Aim. *To teach the story, and bring out types of character in Festus and Agrippa.* (*Acts xxv. and xxvi.*)

PREPARATION

Festus succeeds Felix.—Refer to last lesson: who tried S. Paul? Why had Felix gone? Recalled to Rome. Who succeeded him? Festus. How long had S. Paul been waiting at Cæsarea? Two years. What was this form of imprisonment called? "Free custody" (Lesson XLII). How would S. Paul employ his time?

PRESENTATION

I. *The Jews' further attempt against S. Paul.*—Think of S. Paul's enemies—the Jews—had they forgotten him? Read xxv. 1–5. What did they ask Festus to do? Why? His answer? Show that Festus means to be just; contrast with Felix greedy for money.

II. *The new Trial at Cæsarea.*—Read verses 6–8, and from S. Paul's reply show what the Jewish charges were. (Compare xxiv. 5, 6, and Lesson XLIII.)

III. *S. Paul appeals to Cæsar.*—Let teacher read 9–12 and explain. Festus wishing to gain favour with Jews offers S. Paul a trial at Jerusalem: "before me" suggests Festus as judge, but this would be no favour to the Jews: the offer probably means "before the Sanhedrin," and seems a snare. This explains S. Paul's reply: a trial before Sanhedrin meant sentence of death. (See xxii. 22, and remember plots.) God had told him he should bear witness at Rome (xxiii. 11). As a Roman citizen therefore he appeals to Cæsar, to be tried at Rome in a Roman court.

IV. *King Agrippa visits Festus and hears Case.*—Festus perhaps surprised and somewhat dismayed, but having conferred with his council of officers and others of his staff he allows the appeal. What would happen next? Class read xxv. 25–27, and suggest Festus' difficulty: he has to report on the case to the Emperor and does not know what to say. Now turn back to verse 13. Who is Agrippa? Son of Agrippa who killed S. James, imprisoned S. Peter, and (Acts xii. 23) died a dreadful death. A Jew and thoroughly acquainted with Jewish customs, &c. No one could help Festus better than he to understand this difficult case. What does Festus do? (verses 14–22). He welcomes Agrippa, tells him of the case, and gladly accepts his offer to hear S. Paul himself.

V. *The Great Gathering in the Palace.*—Picture the scene, Agrippa paying a state visit to Roman governor; compare Indian Princes

welcoming Viceroy of India as representative of the King: briefly summarise Festus' speech already read and come to

VI. *S. Paul's defence of his Life and Work.*—Note, two years' imprisonment will have left their mark, a prisoner, never imposing in appearance, now toilworn, but, as defence shows, full of faith and courage. A defence of Christianity.

Speech whether read by teacher or class should be summarised:

xxvi. Verses 1–3: Compliment to Agrippa: as a Jew he will understand the case.

Verses 4, 5: S. Paul brought up as a Pharisee.

Verses 6–8: He stands for the hope of Israel, *i.e.* in a future life now proved and proclaimed by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verses 9–11: He had persecuted the Christians to destroy this belief.

Verses 12–18: Until in the wonderful vision on the road to Damascus Jesus Himself appeared to him, converted him, and sent him to preach in His Name to the Gentiles forgiveness and inheritance in the mercies of God. (Compare Eph. iii. 1–6.)

Verses 19–23: He could not disobey the heavenly vision, hence his work and the hatred shown by the Jews. He cannot heed this, is bound to preach Jesus Christ, the Messiah, suffering, dying, risen from the dead, the Light of the World.

The effect on Festus and Agrippa (verses 24–29).—Festus startled by eloquence thinks him mad. S. Paul seeing Agrippa moved appeals to him to confess to the truth. Read aloud verses 28, 29. Very hard: probably Agrippa ashamed to confess before such a gathering passes off S. Paul's appeal with a scoff. (See R.V.)

Festus and Agrippa agree that S. Paul is innocent.

APPLICATION

The Hindrances to Belief.—Festus means to be just, but is a man of the world, and cold; no doubt despises this humble prisoner, whose earnestness seems madness.

Agrippa knows, he can see truth, but is afraid, cannot sacrifice himself, pride and weakness.

Litany teaches us to pray "from blindness of heart (Festus), pride, and vainglory . . . hardness of heart, and contempt of God's word (Jews and Agrippa), good Lord deliver us."

Expression Work: 1. Write out passages where word "Christian" is used in the New Testament. What does it mean?

2. Read S. Paul's speech carefully, and make a brief summary of it.

Hymn 447, A. and M., "Soldiers, who are Christ's below."

Lesson XLV. THE VOYAGE TO ROME: STORM AND SHIPWRECK

Aim. *To bring out, as S. Luke intended, the personality of S. Paul.* (*Acts xxvii.*)

[*N.B.*—A big rough map of the Mediterranean on cartridge paper or blackboard to mark voyage necessary. Describe vividly throughout.]

PREPARATION

To-day the story of S. Paul's voyage: a whole chapter. Why so important? Let class suggest. S. Paul on his way to Rome, Christ to be preached in the capital city: S. Luke was on board, cannot forget terrible experience: both suggestions true, but the chapter is a wonderful picture of S. Paul, the hero, courageous, trusted. Tell class Nelson read this chapter just before battle of Copenhagen.

A Sea Voyage 1900 *years Ago.*—Map. From Cæsarea to Rome by sea to-day. If direct? *viâ* Crete, Straits of Messina, to port for Rome. What sort of vessel? Show picture of modern Mediterranean liner (P. & O. advertisement or sketch), well fitted, every comfort, a few days. S. Paul's ship? (Sketch.) Ancient sailing vessel, keeping when possible close to shore: no comforts, very slow, depends on wind.

Should you like a trip to-day by sea? Some afraid, ill, but most English people like the sea. Different in old days: we call sea the "highway of nations"; Horace, a Roman poet not long before S. Paul, called it "the Ocean forbidding intercourse" or "the barrier of nations." Travelling by sea then specially dangerous and uncomfortable.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Start from Cæsarea.*—A sailing ship depends on weather: what time of year? See xxvii. 9, "the fast," *i.e.* great day of Atonement, October. Near the winter season, and no navigation then after beginning of November.

Read xxvii. 1–6. Some time has passed in preparing: S. Paul—an important prisoner—and others in charge of Julius. S. Paul's comrades? Aristarchus (verse 2) and S. Luke ("we"). How there? Not prisoners, could not go as friends, probably as personal attendants to S. Paul, a Roman going to plead case before Emperor.

Picture embarkation: S. Paul glad to be free from confinement, to see the sea, &c., confident, going to Rome: other passengers somewhat anxious, dreading voyage. Take a ship of Adramyttium, homeward bound, touch at Sidon next day, 70 miles, a good run, kindness of Julius, wind contrary, sail by the east of Cyprus, and with currents and land breezes along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia to Myra, a harbour of Lycia (15 days). S. Paul sees Mount Taurus, known from boyhood.

II. *Change of Ship at Myra: Bad weather.*—Here centurion finds an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy, and transfers his charges and guards to her: a large corn ship (verses 37, 38). Egypt the granary of Rome—importance of these vessels. Compare London and food supply. Map: direct route? Across to Greece. Read verses 7–8. Class describe from map, reach Cnidus after many days, and bad head winds, turn south, and passing east promontory of Crete, coast along under shelter to Fair Havens near Lasea.

III. *The Consultation at Fair Havens, Crete: S. Paul's advice disregarded.*—Read verses 9–12. The Consultation. What? A Roman government ship and the centurion as senior officer would preside. S. Paul's advice asked as an experienced traveller and important man; warns them against voyage in vain; they decide to sail on to Phœnix along coast, and winter there.

IV. *The Winter Gale sets in* (verses 13–17).—Set sail with favourable wind, pass Cape Matala, gale from north bursts from high Cretan mountains over open bay, driven across, seek shelter under Clauda, prepare for worst, boat taken in (S. Luke helping), ropes passed round ship to hold straining timbers together, the big sail struck, and with a storm-sail to help steering and keep away from dangerous African sandbanks beat out across the stormy sea.

V. *All Hope Lost* (verses 18–20).—Lighten ship, cargo, &c., overboard, hope fades, even S. Paul seems to despair.

VI. *S. Paul to the Front* (verses 21–26).—Class read, bring out—the vision—as before in trouble God at hand (Ps. cxlv. 18). S. Paul has prayed for them—they should have listened to him and saved their ship—they will be shipwrecked, but God will spare their lives, and he shall appear before Cæsar.

VII. *Breakers Ahead! Ashore at Malta. All Saved.*—A glimmer of hope after fourteen days' awful experience. Teacher describes noise of breakers, sounding for land, casting anchors, plot of some of crew to leave ship. Paul the leader: orders obeyed, advice taken, all trust him: ship run ashore, suggestion to kill prisoners, centurion interferes for Paul's sake, all get to land.

APPLICATION

A wonderful picture of S. Paul: the prisoner becomes the leader and saviour of all: the hero. Courage and faith in God. Story of many a storm and shipwreck in life as well as at sea shows how faith in God and Jesus Christ is the anchor of hope.

Expression Work: Read 2 Cor. xi. 23–28, and see what a wonderful life of hardship and adventure S. Paul's was.

Hymn 285, A. and M., "Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep."

Lesson XLVI. THE WINTER IN MALTA: ROME AT LAST

Aim. *To interest class in the story, and to show S. Paul's courage and faith.* (*Acts xxviii.* 1–16.)

PREPARATION

Safe ashore at Malta.—Briefly recall previous lesson, anchors out, waiting for dawn, beaching of the ship, all safely ashore. Feelings of thankfulness and curiosity.

Where are we? Melita, *our* Malta since 1800, nearly 500 miles from Clauda, where they last saw land; drifting in awful storm thirteen days and more. Time of year? Weather? How welcomed? (xxviii. 1, 2). Barbarians? What? Neither Greeks nor Romans; acted most kindly, not like wreckers, as in Cornwall years ago.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Paul and the Snake.*—Picture groups round fire gathering wood: a startling incident (xxviii. 3–6). What did islanders think when serpent bit S. Paul? Why change their minds? When before had he been taken for a god? Lystra (xiv. 11). News of wreck spreads, the governor himself comes to help (xxviii. 7–10). Looks after shipwrecked people (276, Acts xxvii. 37), entertaining S. Paul and his guards for three days.

II. *S. Paul heals the Sick.*—How was S. Paul able to show gratitude? (*N.B.*—S. Luke's use of medical terms.) How did he work his cure? Prayer and laying on of hands. What was result? Sick come from other parts. How did they show their gratitude?

III. *The Voyage resumed.*—Meantime Julius, the Roman officer in charge, not idle. Another ship of Alexandria (see Lesson XLV) wintering there. Name? Show picture with sign. Dioscuri or Twin Brothers, Castor and Pollux, were patrons of sailors. S. Paul and rest transferred and sail. How long at Malta? Class from map trace natural route. Syracuse (80 miles): stay three days: probably wind unfavourable: Rhegium, Messina, Straits, Scylla and Charybdis, story of Ulysses: recent terrible earthquake: Mount Ætna.

IV. *The landing in Italy.*—Then with south wind straight to Puteoli (180 miles), port for Rome (compare Southampton for London), on bay of Naples. (Picture or photograph.) Vesuvius, then thought extinct. Friends for S. Paul? Who? A week's stay: would include the Lord's Day. Imagine service.

V. *On the Road to Rome.*—"And *so* we came to Rome." How? (verse 15). Courage and thankfulness. S. Paul still 100 miles away, but on direct road, and goal near. At Appii Forum and again at Three Taverns, Christians meet him: S. Paul thanks God and takes courage.

VI. *The Eternal City.*—Picture approach to the city: Rome from the Alban Hills, the magnificent Appian Way, the fashionable drive of Rome (Hyde Park), tombs of the great on either side, then through city to the barracks, Forum with temples, noble houses on Palatine (hence called palaces), &c., crowds of people of all nations, numberless slaves: Rome, the mistress of the world, a wicked, proud city, and Nero, its Emperor, wicked and cruel.

As at Corinth and Athens what thoughts would stir S. Paul? The need of Christ: what a difference to the lives of all! They reach the barracks. Read verse 16 thoughtfully and give the last scene. S. Paul and S. Luke enter Rome together: S. Paul is honoured, but a prisoner, lives by himself in his own house, with the soldier responsible for him.

APPLICATION

Class recall story of voyage: six months: what picture of S. Paul? His courage, faith, &c. An ordinary voyage of an ordinary prisoner? No, suggest a journey of triumph. Why? S. Paul saves life, wins esteem of centurion, crew, soldiers, &c., shakes the deadly viper from his hand, heals Publius and other sick folk: a triumphal progress. (Compare S. Mark xvi. 18.) S. Luke sees our Lord's words fulfilled: how happy at Malta: crew, passengers, governor, islanders, all respected if not loved him.

What gave S. Paul this power? In storm, at wreck when prisoners' lives threatened, &c., why so calm? Faith in God's word. Read again xxiii. 11 and xxvii. 23–25.

"*Fear not, Paul.*"—We must see this: S. Paul believed and trusted when things looked hopeless: a splendid motto (Rom. viii. 28). "All things," &c. In danger, difficulty, disappointment, &c., believe with S. Paul. "God is here, He knows, and is working for best."

Expression Work: Give briefly the circumstances under which S. Paul came across Roman officials, and show what kind of men they were.

Hymn 189, A. and M., "Jesu, Thy mercies are untold."

Lesson XLVII. S. PAUL PREACHES THE KINGDOM IN ROME

Aim. *To show S. Paul as the preacher of the Kingdom.* (*Acts xxviii.* 17–31.)

PREPARATION

The Hope fulfilled.—We all look forward to a visit, holiday, treat: S. Paul has been looking forward—to what? (Rom. i. 10, 11, 15). Epistle written six and more years before. Now in Rome.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Jews in Rome.*—Did he expect to come as a prisoner? What difference did it make? Read xxviii. 17. Compare work at Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, &c.? Begins with Jews. How were Jews in Rome? (See Lesson XXXIV; expelled by Claudius.) Edict not strictly enforced, many Jews captives, traders, unpopular, settled across the Tiber (compare parts of East London): many synagogues, proselytes in court and society, great influence.

II. *S. Paul's address.*—What did S. Paul say to them? (verses 17–20). Class works out (1) S. Paul not unfaithful to his people or customs of the fathers; (2) yet a prisoner and compelled to appeal to Cæsar to secure justice; (3) though persecuted by his countrymen, he is really a prisoner for hope of Israel.

Explain: Jesus Christ the Messiah of the Jewish hope is the Saviour of the World—Jews thought only of themselves and narrowed this hope: in preaching Christ for Gentiles as well as Jews S. Paul is preaching the true "hope of Israel."

III. *The Jews' reply.*—Class from verses 21–22 state, (1) They have heard nothing against him from Jerusalem; (2) they only know that the "Christians" (or "Nazarenes") are everywhere spoken against; (3) they will hear him.

IV. *The Meeting.*—How had S. Paul always begun to Jews? (See Lessons XXIX, XXX.) So now: read verse 23. The suffering Messiah: the coming of the Kingdom: Judaism fulfilled in Christianity.

V. *The Result* (verses 24–29).—Jews divided.

VI. *S. Paul's solemn Warning.*—Hard, impenitent, proud, self-willed, as their history shows them to be, they are rejecting God's message, which will be given to the Gentiles, and they will hear it. Book ends with picture of *S. Paul's work in Rome.* Class describe from verses 30, 31. Where can we find names of some Roman Christians? In Epistle to Rom. xvi. 3–15. Any well known? Priscilla and Aquila. Read S. Paul's tribute (xvi. 3, 4). Who else constantly with him? S. Luke. How was S. Paul employed? Helping visitors, &c. How did he help the Churches he had founded? By his Epistles and

letters (next lesson). What was S. Luke doing? Writing Gospel and preparing Acts. Could he or S. Paul have done much writing when travelling? No. What then do we owe to this imprisonment? God makes opportunities like this. Note last clause, "none forbidding him," free to preach the Gospel.

VII. *The Preaching of the Kingdom.*—Turn to Acts i. 3. What did Jesus specially talk to His disciples about in the forty days? The Kingdom of God (Lesson II). What did S. Paul talk about to the Jews? (xxviii. 23): to visitors? (xxviii. 31). What is this Kingdom? Class will probably suggest "Where God reigns—the Church, Christian hearts, &c." Take "where God reigns"—*i.e.* God our King, we must obey Him. How? What did Christ tell His disciples to do? (S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). What did our Lord say to Nicodemus? (S. John iii. 5). What then is the ordained means of entrance into the Kingdom? Show that the Apostles taught this (Acts ii. 37, 38: S. Peter). So other followers (viii. 12): Philip. Who received our Lord's commands? The Apostles. When? During our Lord's life on earth, especially the forty days (Acts i. 3, Lesson II). How can we best see what these commands were? By seeing what they did and what they taught. What? Baptized, confirmed (laying on of hands), celebrated the Holy Communion (breaking of bread), taught the power of united prayer, Death, Resurrection, Coming again of Jesus, Gift of the Holy Spirit, &c. Did the early Christians accept this? (Acts ii. 41–42). Why? As Christ's command. What do we call the body of Christians doing to-day what the Apostles did? The Church—full titles? One Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. S. Paul then speaking to the Jews about the Kingdom of God is trying to make them understand and believe that they must become members of Christ's Church. Why did they find it hard? Because they were the Chosen Nation, &c.

APPLICATION

To what Church do you belong? Some will say Holy Catholic, &c., others Church of England; show that Church of England is a true branch of the Holy Catholic Church. Why do you belong to it? Because you believe that the Church was founded by Christ, and that you are obeying His commands. Remind class of the meaning of Churchman. (Lessons I and XXXVII.) How can we show that we belong to the Lord? By doing what He taught, prayer, communion, faithful life.

Expression Work: Show from Phil. i. 7, 13, 14; i. 13; with iv. 22; ii. 23–24 (1) that S. Paul was a prisoner, (2) probably in Rome, (3) and expecting to be set at liberty.

Hymn 217, A. and M., "Thy Kingdom come, O God."

Lesson XLVIII. S. PAUL'S EPISTLES

Aim. *To interest class in Epistles, and show what we can learn from them.*

PREPARATION

The end of the "Acts."—If we were reading an interesting book and last chapter left hero in prison awaiting trial, and we heard no more, we should feel disappointed. "Acts" looks like this. Why did S. Luke end here? Read i. 1–2. What was this former treatise? Read i. 8, think of story of Acts. Where did disciples begin? Jerusalem. Then? Judæa, Samaria. Then? Asia Minor, Greece: lastly Rome, from East to distant West. If we call S. Luke's Gospel volume i., we can call Acts volume ii., probably S. Luke meant to write volume iii. What would it have contained? The trial of S. Paul for certain, probably, from what we know elsewhere, his release, further work, second imprisonment at Rome, martyrdom.

PRESENTATION

I. *S. Paul's Epistles.*—Where can we find some information about these things? In Epistles or letters. Also in various early writers.

Before looking at the letters of the imprisonment, see first how many letters we have of S. Paul. Class count 13 and Epistle to Hebrews. Note two kinds, first to Churches, then to persons. Look at length; class count pages in Bible and see that they are in order of length. Romans longer than 1 Corinthians, &c. Arranged thus on purpose, not in order of time of writing. Probably 1 Thessalonians written first, and 2 Timothy written last. Why Hebrews at end? (The class will see that it is out of place, *i.e.* it is not among letters to Churches and at end though longer than most.) Because when the New Testament books were collected together the Church was not sure that S. Paul had written it, so they put it after the others of which they were certain.

II. *Four groups of Epistles.*—On blackboard or by diagram explain briefly:

Group.	Written to	Motto.	Chief Subject.
I. 1 and 2 Thessalonians.	Christians who were mistaken as to the Advent.	Repent, prepare.	Second Advent.
II. Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians.	Christians who erred in faith and life.	Christ shall make you free.	Cross and Resurrection.
III. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon.	Christians who were faithful.	To sum up all things in Christ.	The Ascended Christ reigns over the world.
IV. 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.	The clergy.	Feed My sheep.	Guidance for the conduct of the Church.

How are we able to group them? By likeness to one another, allusions to places and people.

III. *The Letters of the First Imprisonment.*—Asked to find out three things from Philippians: now look at the other Epistles in Group 3. Class read references and arrange in four columns:

	Philippians.	Ephesians.	Colossians.	Philemon.
A prisoner	i. 7, 13, 14	iii. 1; iv. 1; vi. 20	iv. 10, 18	9, 10, 23
In Rome	i. 13; iv. 22	vi. 20	...	...
Expecting release .	ii. 23–24	...	...	22

Class see that they fit together and agree.

Look again: to whom written?

Philippians: his dear Macedonians. Ephesians meant for other Churches besides: remember Church at Ephesus. Colossians: another Church in Asia Minor, letter similar. Philemon: the master of a runaway slave Onesimus (verse 10; compare Colossians iv. 9). Tell class the penalty was death. Note the power of Christ: S. Paul trusts Christian master to receive penitent slave as a brother, the slave now a Christian is ready to return.

IV. *Why written?* Philippians, to thank them for help and sympathy, and encourage them in their life. Ephesians and Colossians, to warn against dangers to faith, and remind of high calling. Philemon, on behalf of a slave.

V. *How written?* Class read Rom. xvi. 22. Tertius writes at S. Paul's dictation. 2 Thess. iii. 17, the parting salutation or grace written by S. Paul's own hand. Compare Col. iv. 18, and explain Gal. vi. 11. S. Paul anxious to impress his readers takes pen and writes. Note R.V. "with how large letters," &c.

VI. *S. Paul's friends and helpers.*—Encourage class to find them: Timothy, Phil. i. 1–ii. 19, messages to Macedonia. Also Col. i. 1 and Philemon 1. Epaphroditus (Phil. iv. 18) brought the gift from Philippi (ii. 25–30), has been dangerously ill: Luke the beloved physician, Mark, Aristarchus, Epaphras, all mentioned both in Colossians and Philemon, and others. Think of these faithful helpers, visiting Apostle and working under his directions.

VII. *His witness to Christ in Rome.*—Read Phil. i. 12–20 as a picture of his work. Notice palace (13), *i.e.* prætorium, either the guard or barracks or Emperor's court where case was heard.

APPLICATION

God turns Disappointments to Blessings.—Bring out: S. Paul on trial preaches Christ boldly in Rome. Owing to his imprisonment we have these noble letters, helpful to millions everywhere, always. Picture S. Paul praying as he would in the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done."

Expression Work: Write out Phil. ii. 24 and Philemon 22. Compare with 2 Tim. iv. 6–8. What change has taken place in the Apostle's expectations? How can you account for it?

Hymn 531, A. and M., "Father of mercies, in Thy Word."

Lesson XLIX. THE PASTORAL LETTERS AND THEIR STORY

Aim. *To show how these letters illuminate the concluding portion of S. Paul's life.*

PREPARATION

End of the First Imprisonment.—Refer to Expression Work of last lesson. What did you learn from the first three passages? S. Paul prisoner at Rome expecting release. How shown? Coming to Philippi shortly, asks Philemon to prepare a lodging. In 2 Timothy? Prisoner, expecting death. Unless great unexpected change these letters cannot have been written at same time. Again, the four letters of first imprisonment deal with the two years at end of Acts xxviii. 30–31. Nature of that imprisonment? Many friends mentioned in Colossians and Philemon: name some. Now look at 2 Tim. i. 15. All in Asia have deserted Apostle, i. 16–17. Onesiphorus finds him with difficulty. Timothy with him before (Salutations and Phil. ii. 19), now at Ephesus, S. Paul sends for him (iv. 9). Demas, Tychicus, Mark, all away (iv. 10, 11, 12). Only Luke with him (iv. 11). What a change! Again, iv. 16–18: a recent trial, S. Paul only just saved from death, and now death near. Very different from end of Acts and picture in Philippians, &c.

Hence we believe there was a second imprisonment, *i.e.* S. Paul released as expected in Philippians, and again later, after further work, imprisoned and expecting death. This the universal tradition.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Witness of the Pastoral Epistles.*—This supported by Pastoral Epistles, which, 1. record journeys other than those of Acts.

2. Show more complete organisation of the Church; this would take time.

3. Are different in style and language, and belong to later group (Lesson XLVIII).

II. *S. Paul's work after his Release.*—Let us then assume that the two years are over, S. Paul has successfully defended himself and been released, can we trace the story during the interval until we find him (as in 2 Tim.) again in prison awaiting death? Yes: partly from Pastoral Epistles. Take Bible and map. Rom. xv. 24–28, S. Paul meant to go to Spain,

and possibly did so. Phil. ii. 24 and Philemon 22, meant when released to visit Philippi and Colossæ. Sketch possible journeys from passages in Pastoral Epistles. S. Paul, released, visits Spain, turns east, visits Corinth (2 Tim. iv. 20), leaves Erastus, sails along coast of Asia Minor, leaves Trophimus, sick, at Miletus, visits Ephesus, and starting for Macedonia leaves Timothy in charge (1 Tim. i. 3) as bishop. Calls at Troas on the way (2 Tim. iv. 13), either now or later. Also journeys to Crete (Titus i. 5), appoints Titus there as bishop: later visits Nicopolis on west coast of Achaia (Titus iii. 12), where he intends to winter. On the way probably wrote 1 Timothy and Titus; asks Titus to come to him as soon as Artemas or Tychicus arrive to take his place.

III. *Arrested again.*—More than three years pass, then, as we believe, after great fire in Rome, A.D. 64, fierce persecution against Christians spreads throughout Empire; S. Paul seized possibly at Nicopolis, taken to Rome, now in very different circumstances penning his last letter to Timothy, full of courage himself, with sympathy for the young bishop's trials, deserted, alas! by all save the faithful S. Luke (2 Tim. iv. 11).

IV. *Awaiting death in prison at Rome.*—Compare closing scene of our Lord's life: "all forsook Him and fled," and the little group at Cross, of disciples only John with Him.

The last words upon the Cross? "It is finished," &c. The cry of triumphant faith echoed in words of Apostle (2 Tim. iv. 6–8).

Teacher will finish story graphically. S. Paul as condemned is probably in the Tullianum, the prison adjoining Forum; procession to place of execution outside city where Church of S. Paul stands (show photo if possible and note this Church for years under special care of King of England), the axe falls, S. Paul has won his martyr crown.

APPLICATION

Was he sorry to go? (Phil. i. 21–24). Was he afraid to go? Why not? Because ready: had done his duty, had tried to find and follow God's will, in life or death he trusted in Him. Read 2 Tim. iv. 18, except the parting greetings, S. Paul's last words.

Expression Work: Read 2 Tim. i. What light does it throw upon Timothy's home, ordination, and character?

Hymn 356, A. and M., "Lord, speak to me that I may speak."

Lesson L. THE GOSPEL OF THE SPIRIT THE BOOK OF HEROES

Aim. *To show that "the Acts" is a living story worth reading.*

PREPARATION

A Book worth Reading.—Why do you read books? pleasure or profit. Sometimes, I hope, both. Name some you read for profit. Various lesson books, the Bible, &c. For pleasure? Various story books, adventures. Some read many times. Why read Acts? I hope both for pleasure and profit. What sort of lesson book is it most like? History. And story book? Adventure. How does Church show its importance? Read over and over again regularly in the daily lessons like Gospel.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Acts a Book of Heroes.*—What can we learn from Acts? First: Acts? Meaning? Whose doings or deeds or work? Get names and information thus:

The work of (1) SS. Peter, John. What? Where? Why there? (See Acts i. 8.) Repeat questions for (2) SS. Stephen and Philip. (3) SS. Barnabas and Paul. (4) S. Paul. Was this easy or hard and dangerous work? For their own glory? Were they ready to suffer for it, &c.? What do we call men who go out to live and die for others? Heroes. Whose heroes? Call Acts then a Book of Christian heroes.

II. *The Gospel of the Holy Spirit.*—Why did they do it? Command from Jesus Christ (S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). Did they, or could they, do it in their own strength? Who helped them? The Holy Spirit. Trace this through Acts: ii.; iv. 31; ix.; x. 44–46; xiii. 2, &c. Hence called the Gospel of the Holy Ghost (Lesson II).

III. *The Book of the Kingdom.*—We have seen these men all ready to suffer, all filled with the same power, all aiming to make Christ known to the world. How? By preaching and teaching. What was this teaching? See S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. (1) "To be baptized into the name," &c., (2) and "to observe all things," &c., and so we noticed (Lesson II) that they were taught about the Kingdom of God. What do we call this Kingdom on earth to-day? The Church. Meaning once more? (Lessons I and XXXVII). And so remembering how

the Acts begins and ends with this truth we can call it the Book of the Kingdom or the Church. Is story of the Church finished? Where is it going on to-day? All over the world. So the Acts the story of "The Beginnings of the Church." What parables of our Lord tell us how the Church grows and spreads? Mustard Seed, Leaven. Again, what did our Lord say in His parting commission to His disciples? (S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). When will the Church be complete? When all nations gathered in. How can we help? Missions at home and abroad.

IV. *The Story of two Faithful Friends.*—If you think carefully of the book of the Acts, you will think of two people especially, one mentioned frequently by name: who? S. Paul. The other never mentioned by name: who? S. Luke. Think: he wrote Acts and never mentions his own name. How do we know he was with S. Paul? The "we" sections (Lesson XXIX) of Acts. Any other evidence? The Epistles, *e.g.* Col. iv. 14, Philemon 24, and 2 Tim. iv. 11. What does that tell you about S. Luke's character? Modest, retiring, self-effacing. Yet as S. Paul's comrade in his journeys, by his side in his prison, &c., what must he have been? Bold, faithful, loving. Remember then in reading Acts to think of S. Luke, the modest unnamed writer and loyal comrade. See Prov. xviii. 24: fits S. Luke: no brother could have done more.

V. *The Book of Saints.*—Last thing to remember: what does S. Paul call the Christians in Rome (Rom. i. 7), Corinth (1 Cor. i. 2), Philippi (Phil. i. 1; iv. 21, 22), Colossæ (Col. i. 2), &c. Meaning? Holy. How? By consecration in baptism to God's service. Repeat words of baptismal formula and reception. What other title could we give Acts? Book of Saints, making of Christians—some great saints and heroes—others like ourselves.

APPLICATION

If we have read Acts properly we shall all want to do something more than we have done to help on God's work. Two great ways: (1) work for others; (2) work for ourselves; not selfish things, but trying to make ourselves better, truer, purer in every way. We are all "saints," we must try to live "as becometh saints," true to Christ and to His Church, which from the little beginnings of 120 (Acts i. 15) has now spread and is spreading throughout the world.

Expression Work: What do you mean by a hero? Apply your definition to the lives of Jesus Christ and S. Paul.

Hymn 432, A. and M., "Captains of the saintly band."

Lesson LI. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPIRE

A missionary lesson based on recapitulatory work. Suggested for Advent I. (Can be used for Empire Day.)

"Thy kingdom come."

Aims. 1. *To show how S. Paul was able to journey as he did owing to the Roman Empire.* 2. *To teach the opportunities and responsibilities we have as members of the British Empire.*

Apparatus necessary for this lesson: maps (1) of Europe to-day; (2) of Roman Empire A.D. 60 from a Roman History; (3) of British Empire to-day. (Navy League Map easily obtained.)

PREPARATION

Produce map of *Europe to-day*: refer to recent war of Balkan States with Turkey, note prominent places, connecting lines of railway, the seaports facing east, west, and south, the relation to Italy and Rome.

Place side by side the *Roman Empire of* A.D. 60 coloured, mark in boldly S. Paul's journeys: trace rapidly, stopping at names connected with Balkan war, Thessalonica (Salonica), Berœa (Verria), Athens: no railways then, but great military road called Via Egnatia; trace from Byzantium to Dyrrachium or Apollonia on west coast of Macedonia, across sea to Brundusium, thence by Capua to Rome and back: this the great connecting link between East and West, all under the control of Rome. Refer to the Roman roads in Britain.

PRESENTATION

I. *A Journey in Europe to-day.*—Look at Europe to-day, different colours for different countries, describe journey say from London to Constantinople by railway, halts at frontier stations, what travellers are expected to carry (passports), can pass from one country to another in peace, in war impossible.

II. *A Journey in Europe in* A.D. 60.—Look at Roman Empire: S. Paul's journeys all within its borders: could pass freely: roads protected, and S. Paul a Roman citizen. The Roman Empire thus made S. Paul's work possible. Way prepared by Holy Spirit (Lesson XV). Bidden to go to Gentiles. Was this work confined to him? No: other Apostles engaged, *e.g.* Barnabas, as we see from Acts. Name work ascribed to different Apostles, *e.g.* S. Peter probably also at Rome, S. John and Seven Churches of Asia, S. Thomas and India, &c. Why did they go out like this? The Great Commission (S. Matt. xxviii. 19). Is the work finished? Have all nations heard? What must we do, and why? Our Lord's command.

III. *The Opportunities of Empire.*—Look again at *Roman Empire:* the Mediterranean centre of the then known world—the countries round it *a great seedplot* prepared for the Gospel-sowing.

Men looking for the true God—old religions decayed—did not touch heart.

Produce map of *British Empire* coloured: note different parts of the world. Same language in India, Africa, as in England? No. Same Saviour? Yes. Do they all know this? No. Who ought to teach them? We ought. Why? Because they are of our Empire, and therefore we are responsible, and because Jesus Christ has told us to go "teach all nations."

To-day *British Empire* reaches to all parts—a far *greater seedplot*—Englishmen respected as just and true: trusted by natives: can teach them that they owe all to Jesus Christ.

IV. *Our Duty and Opportunity.*—Sometimes said many heathen at home, why not teach them first and not spend all this money on missions abroad? Is this right? No. Duke of Wellington's saying to a young clergyman who urged this, "You have forgotten your marching orders." What? (S. Matt. xxviii. 19.) S. Paul did not refuse to help Gentiles because Jews would not believe. God sent him. Famous saying, "Christianity is such, that the more you send abroad the more you will have at home." Home Missions never so successful as when foreign missionary zeal is aflame.

APPLICATION

All English people who believe in Jesus Christ should ask themselves, "Why has God given us this vast Empire in all parts of the world? Merely for glory, for gain, for power? Remember great Empires of the past—Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Macedonia, Greece, Rome—all perished. Why? They knew not or they forgot God. Ours the great opportunity of helping to fulfil our Lord's commands, "Go teach," &c: every one of us who loves the Lord must try to help. We cannot all be missionaries abroad, but all can be "King's Messengers" at home, carrying the orders of our King Jesus Christ wherever He sends us, in school or shop or office, and perhaps abroad if He calls us there. We can all pray with real earnestness every day "Thy kingdom come," we can all do a little regularly by joining a missionary league (name suitable league in parish) to help in the great work of carrying out Christ's parting command.

Expression Work: Give in your own words the reasons why all Christians are bound to support Mission Work.

Hymn 586, A. and M., "Lift up your heads, ye gates of brass."

Lesson LII. CHRISTMAS LESSON—"THIS SAME JESUS"

Aim. *To teach the meaning and purpose of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

PREPARATION

Recall title of Acts, Fifth Gospel, Gospel of the Holy Ghost. Then refer to ii. 33, emphasize that it was Jesus, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, who "poured forth this" Gift. Ask class to give briefly an account of any prophecy of the coming of Christ into the world, *e.g.* Gen. iii. 15, Isa. liii. Two things implied, (i) Jesus should come from heaven; (ii) He should be true Man. What then does Christmas Day stand for to Christian people? Coming of expected Saviour as God and Man, long foretold, and prepared for by God.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Annunciation.*—Where was our Lord before His coming to us? In heaven. Who was He there? God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Then ask class why He should come? To redeem. So lead back their thoughts to the Fall, and first Promise. At length an angel was sent to announce His Birth. Let class tell story in their own words—maiden Mary, visit of angel Gabriel, words spoken, especially S. Luke i. 26–38. Most of the account will be familiar. Note particularly (verse 35) that it is the Holy Ghost Who is the Agent through Whom the Son of God is born of the Virgin Mary. (Compare with the same Person's work in Acts giving life to Church.) What does the Nicene Creed say of this? (He was incarnate = made flesh, by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and was made Man.) So the Father "gave His Only Begotten Son" through the Holy Ghost. An angel (= messenger) announced His coming. Ask class to repeat principal texts.

II. *Christmas Day.*—From the time of message until Birth God was preparing all things for His Son's coming. How? Class will tell of taxing, visit to Bethlehem of Joseph and Blessed Virgin, "the wondrous night," angelic songs, visit of shepherds. Then teacher will ask class to think Who was in the manger—the Eternal God, King of kings, Lord of heaven and earth, Hope of the world—all in One Baby Form. Much should be made of the reality of our Lord's Divinity hidden beneath His human Form. It is important that the class be taught to see in our Lord the Eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting, as well as His human Nature: the shepherds worshipped Him, we worship Him to-day.

III. *The Purpose of the Incarnation.*—Read S. John i. 1–14. Teacher will have studied this beforehand with aid of a commentary. The following points should be brought out by questions:

(i) *The Word.*—Why do we use words? To express our thoughts. Then Jesus Christ is called "the Word" because He expresses the thought of God to men. He enables us to think of God. *Cf.* verse 4.

(ii) *Present in Creation.*—The world was made "through (by) Him." From the beginning He was doing the Father's will.

(iii) *The Light.*—Picture darkness of world; only one small nation knew God. Then think how "Acts" tells that the "Light" spread rapidly.

(iv) *The Children of God.*—See R.V. The "right to become" was given by our Lord. *Cf.* S. Peter's speech at Pentecost (Acts i. 37–38).

(v) *The Word became Flesh.*—Ask for the word used in the Nicene Creed—"incarnate."

(vi) *The Word declared God.*—Refer to verse 1, and *cf.* verse 14. They teach the same truths, viz. (i) that our Lord always was God, (ii) that He always lived in the bosom of the Father, (iii) that He came to declare the Father to men—to teach them that God's will was to save all men through His Son.

IV. *The Acts and the Incarnation.*—See Acts v. 30; vii. 52; ix. 20–22; x. 36; xiii. 23. All the Apostles speak of the Incarnation of our Lord. He could not have suffered, died, risen, unless He had first been born. All agree that the world was prepared for this greatest event by the prophets whom God sent to announce His coming.

APPLICATION

We have ever to remember that the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ was the great miracle by which God brought about the Redemption of the world. Two things to emphasize, (i) the greatness of the love of the Holy Trinity, all co-operating to give the world the "peace" which Christmas brought; (ii) the humility of our Lord in deigning to save the world thus. Refer to Parable of Good Samaritan; ask who is the poor wounded man (ourselves). Then notice "He came where he was," *i.e.* the Samaritan (our Lord) came into our lives, took our weak nature, knew all that we suffer and how weak we are to do good. What great love we ought to give Him in return!

How are we to show that love? Follow His steps, walk humbly, prayerfully; imitate His life. See Acts x. 38. Learn the text, "He went about doing good"—no evil, the sinless Saviour ever working "for us men, and for our salvation." Recall that we are brothers of Christ, God's children "by adoption and grace." See Collect for Christmas Day, and explain.

Expression Work: 1. Write out Heb. i. 1–4.

2. Find the Gloria in the Holy Communion Service, and write out the passages which belong to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

Hymn 55, A. and M., "O come, Redeemer of mankind."

Lesson LIII. EASTER LESSON—"BOTH LORD AND CHRIST"

Aim. *To teach that the Resurrection of our Lord was a Fact, and that it has power to change lives.*

PREPARATION

Ask for chief point of Apostles' teaching in Acts. (The Resurrection of our Lord.) What day did they always keep in memory of it? (First day of week.) Every Sunday a memorial of Resurrection. Hence title given to Easter Day, "the Queen of Festivals," since every Sunday bids us look to it. What do we think of on Easter Day? Class will tell order of events leading from Good Friday to Easter, teacher directing them by questions so as to keep the narrative orderly—death, burial, watch, sealing of tomb, Resurrection, visit of the holy women "while it was yet dark," the angels and their message.

PRESENTATION

I. *The Apostles were witnesses to the Fact.*—Read Acts i. 8, 22. Let us find how this "witness" was made possible. To whom did our Lord first appear? (Mary Magdalene.) What did she do? (Told the rest.) Who went to the tomb? Read S. John xx. 1–10. Notice carefully, "linen clothes lying," *i.e.* the Body had passed through them, leaving them, without unwinding them, as a sign to those who saw them that Risen Lord was alive and actively at work. Then read S. Luke xxiv. 34, appearance to S. Peter, then to "James the Lord's brother" (1 Cor. xv. 5–8). Who was he? (Acts xv. 13). So far it is thought he had not believed. This converted him. Then let class tell briefly of walk to Emmaus, return of two disciples, and the appearance to the Ten at night (S. Luke xxiv. 13–49). When did the Eleven see Him together? (S. John xx. 24–26). How many saw Him on Ascension Day? (Acts i. 15.)

II. *S. Paul the Apostle "born out of due time."*—Recall S. Stephen's vision. Who was present at martyrdom? Did S. Paul ever see the Risen Christ? (Acts ix. 3–5; 1 Cor. xv. 8). Ask class to give these incidents. So S. Paul also was a "witness." Called to be an "Apostle" (1 Cor. ix. 1), though not among the Twelve. What was his special work? (To "witness" to the Gentiles of the fact and power of the Resurrection.) How did he know it was a Fact? How did he know it had Power? (His own life was completely changed; the Risen Christ could do the same for others.) Though "born out of due time" he saw, and knew the power of the living Christ as God and Lord.

III. *His witness to the Risen Christ.*—Picture S. Paul, the man, in haste to do his Lord's work. Description of him in a book written in the early centuries called the *Acts of Paul and Thecla.* "A man small in size, bald-headed, bandy-legged, well-built, with eyebrows meeting." This man was to do the work of winning the Roman Empire! How? Think of the first European Church founded by S. Paul. (Philippi.) Recall how S. Paul loved it (Lesson XLVIII). What letter did he write to it? (Epistle to Philippians.) Read Phil. iii. 7–14. What is S. Paul speaking of here? What does he himself look for (verse 10). The Resurrection is the power in his life here, and his hope for the life to come. So with us—power, hope, joy.

IV. *The name Easter and its meaning.*—Read Acts xii. 4, A.V. What did the Jews call their great festival? (Passover.) What did it commemorate? Class will give account of deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Teacher will show parallel between this and Resurrection. Nation sunk in slavery = world sunk in sin: Moses returned from Midian = Christ returned from grave: Pharaoh compelled to let Israel go = Satan beaten by Christ. Hebrew word for Passover "Pesach"; Greek word "Pascha." Both mean "a passing over."

English word "Easter" is very old, heathen word, telling us of time before Christianity came to England. Then our Norse forefathers worshipped a heathen goddess named Eastre, the Dawn, bringing joy to men. When sun rose she was said to open heaven. The idea was transferred to our Lord, the Light of the World, Opener of heaven to all, Joy-bringer of new day that was never to set through His Resurrection.

Speak of custom of presenting Easter eggs to friends. Why? Egg the symbol of life out of apparent death (living chick from the dead egg), and so of resurrection and immortality.

APPLICATION

Read "Easter Anthems." The first connects Easter with Passover; second, with death to sin and triumph; third, with immortality through Christ's Resurrection. Connect this with meaning of Easter joy as given in Collect. Our Baptism tells us of the death of Christ; our work is so to live as to follow Him beyond the tomb to His heavenly home.

Expression Work: 1. Why is Easter Day the Queen of Christian Festivals?

2. Write out the last of the Easter Anthems and explain it.

Hymn 133, A. and M., "Come, ye faithful, raise the strain."

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THE PAULINE WORLD

A.D. 44-60

(Syria and Palestine as in Jan. 44)

St Paul's Routes -----

Scale of Miles

0 40 80 120 160

ITALIA
MARE HADRIATICUM
PROVINCIA DALMATIA
PROVINCIA MOESIA SUPERIOR
PONTUS EUXINUS
PROVINCIA THRACIA
PROVINCIA BITHYNIA ET PONTUS
PROVINCIA GALATIA
REGNUM POLEMONIS
PROVINCIA MACEDONIA
MARE TUSCUM
MARE IONIUM
MARE AEGAEUM
PROVINCIA ACHAIA
PROVINCIA ASIA
PROVINCIA CAPPADOCIA
REGNUM ANTIOCHI
SICILIA
ADRIA
CRETE
CARIA
LYDIA
MYSIA
PROVINCIA LYCIA
PROVINCIA PAMPHYLIA
CILICIA TRACHEIA
CYPRUS
PROVINCIA SYRIA ET CILICIA ET PHOENICE
REGNUM HERODIS
MARE INTERNUM
AEGYPTUS

ROME, III Tabernae, Forum Appi, Puteoli, Via Appia, Brundisium, Dyrrachium, Via Egnatia, Philippi, Neapolis, Amphipolis, Thessalonica, Apollonia, Beroea, Methone, Samothrace, Constantinople, Propontis, Troas, Assos, Lesbos, Nicopolis, Messina, Rhegium, Syracuse, Malta, Corinth, Cenchreae, Athens, Chios, Samos, Ephesus, Colossai, Miletus, Patmos, Crudes, Rhodes, Patara, Myra, Attaleia, Perga, Antiocheia Colonia, Claud-Iconium, Lystra-Colonia, Claudia Derbe, Mons Taurus, Tarsus, Korasion, Antioch, Seleuceia, Phoenix, C. Matala, Fair Havens, Cauda, Salmone, Salamis, Paphos, Damascus, Sidon, Tyre, Ptolemais, Caesareia, Samaria, Joppa, Antipatris, Lydda, Jerusalem, Gaza, Alexandria

12 16 20 24 28 32 36

44 40 36 32

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